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**OLD AND NEW
BOOKS AS LIFE TEACHERS**

BOOKS BY
EDWIN A. McALPIN

FAITH, HEALTH AND COMMON SENSE
OLD AND NEW BOOKS AS LIFE TEACHERS
ON TO CHRIST

OLD AND NEW BOOKS AS LIFE TEACHERS

BY
EDWIN A. McALPIN



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FIRST EDITION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY CHILDREN,

in the hope that the line of reasoning suggested in its
pages may help them, and the men and women of
their generation, translate the Faith of their Fathers
into lives of purity and service.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Some of the chapters of this book have appeared as articles in the *Presbyterian Advance* and the *Presbyterian Banner*, and I desire to thank the editors of these magazines for permission to use this material.

A VIZUALIZATION OF THE UNDERLYING UNITY OF THESE STUDIES

- I. Civilization is founded on religion. When religious faith is weakened or lost, national life is in danger.

Chapter I. Recent Books about Lost Cities and Civilizations.

- II. The aspiration of men for something more than material things suggests the importance of religion.

Chapter II. The Search for Satisfaction.

Kipling and *Kim*, Hutchinson and *One Increasing Purpose*.

- III. Some of the elements of life that emphasize the importance of religion.

- (1) SIN.

Chapter III. Sin and Its Consequences.

Scaramouche, by Sabatini, and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, by Stevenson.

- (2) PROMPTINGS OF THE INNER NATURE.

Chapter IV. *Lord Jim*, by Conrad—the story of a guilty conscience.

- (3) DISAPPOINTMENTS AND SUFFERING IN LIFE.

Chapter V. The Problem of Suffering.
Fortitude, by Walpole.

- (4) DEATH AND IMMORTALITY.

Chapter VI. Tennyson and Immortality.

- IV. The importance of religion in social life.

Chapter VII. The Sordid or the Radiant Life.

Main Street, by Lewis, and *In the Heart of a Fool*, by White.

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Chapter VIII. The Conflict between Theology and Spirituality.

Hypatia, by Kingsley.

VI. Three interpretations of Christianity.

(1) PERSONALITY AND ETERNAL REALITY.

Chapter IX. The Spiritual Message of Thomas Carlyle.

(2) DEMOCRACY AS RELIGION.

Chapter X. Joseph Mazzini "On the Duties of Man."

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INTRODUCTION

WE ARE living in a non-theological age. Dogmas and doctrines have lost their authority. Young people are in rebellion against bigotry and everything that shows a sectarian spirit. This antagonistic frame of mind, which is primarily directed against the theological statements of the Church, begets an indifference to the spiritual significance of Christianity. People forget that Christ did not use creeds or dogmas in imparting the Gospel. He used parables drawn from daily experience and brief epigrammatic statements which stirred both the imagination and the conscience.

Christ spoke of religion as "life." He said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He claimed to be "the Bread of Life" and He also gave others "the Water of Life." The significance of the Branch and the Vine is their oneness of life. The Parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan emphasize the impor-

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tance of life rather than creedal belief. When Nicodemus, a trained theologian, came to the Master at night Christ interpreted the Gospel to him by using an illustration drawn from a universal experience. He said, "Ye must be born again." The implication of this statement is clear and simple. The beginning of spiritual life is like the origin of physical life. They both begin with a birth. These illustrations might be multiplied, but enough has been said to indicate the way in which Christ called attention to the similarity between religion and life.

After Christ left them changes took place among the Christians. Death gathered them one by one. New conditions and people made new demands on the Gospel. Intelligent men desired to understand what their religion meant and required in the way of conduct. This desire led them to codify their religious belief and write systematic statements of faith. Gradually the creeds and theologies men prepared to simplify and interpret Christianity became the center of interest. This tendency to place the emphasis on theology was accentuated by the fact that it is exceedingly hard to think of the

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Gospel as life. While everyone knows what life is, everyone also realizes how hard it is to define it. When we say Christianity is life, our statement lacks definiteness and distinction. The Gospel appears to be lost in a haze of mysticism or lacks all differentiation from other religions.

How can people who are out of sympathy with the theological and creedal statements of the churches be shown the importance of the spirituality Christianity advocates? While studying the essays, poems, and novels used in this book in an effort to grasp their religious implications, a new idea developed. This was to arrange my material so as to illustrate the supreme importance of the Gospel's message for all phases of human experience.

The philosophy found here is no substitute for a creed or theology. My purpose is to indicate from non-religious sources the supreme value of religion in personal experience, and in the organization of society. In an effort to make my meaning clear I have considered the writings of three of the greatest personalities of the last century. One, Thomas Carlyle, was a Scotchman trained as a Presbyterian, who left the Church

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because he could not harmonize his theology with science but never lost his spiritual interests. The second, Joseph Mazzini, was an Italian who gave up the Roman Catholic Church and yet never became a Protestant. The third, Leo Tolstoi, was a Russian educated in the Greek Orthodox Church but best known as an advocate of non-resistance. None of these men can be claimed by any church, and yet all of them were loyal disciples of Christ. Their ideas on Christianity possess a peculiar value because in each case an outstanding intellect tried to explain in a new and original way the spiritual significance of the Gospel. They may not be orthodox members of any church, but nevertheless their interpretations of Christianity are exceedingly helpful.

Human happiness depends upon an individual's establishing a right relationship with spiritual reality. If the chapters that follow convince the reader of this truth the object of my own book has been attained.

After recognizing the supreme value of religion each individual must then, as determined by his own type of mind and mental equipment, ac-

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cept the creed or theology which appeals to him. It does not matter what denomination any particular individual joins. A devout soul can find Christ in any or every institution that bears His name. The world needs a practical demonstration of a spirit of Christian unity. If spiritually minded men could learn to walk humbly with their Master, while maintaining kindly relations with other Christians who disagree with them in theology, the Kingdom of God on earth would receive a tremendous impetus.

It is exceedingly difficult for a person to cultivate deep religious convictions and still remain tolerant toward those with whom he disagrees. We need to be reminded constantly that no two men see anything in exactly the same way. For example, take four men standing on a hill and studying a valley at their feet. In the group there is a real estate speculator, a sportsman, an artist, and a man in love. The first man sees in the valley town lots; the sportsman estimates the chances of bird shooting and trout streams; the artist sees pictures; and the love-lorn youth, a fine place for lonely walks and delightful tête-à-têtes. Every one of these men sees a different

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quality in the valley, and yet all of them see correctly. The personal equation of a man's mental processes qualifies every thought that enters his mind. All men cannot think alike.

According to Christ's definition religion is life, and as such it should appeal to everyone. Personalities differ, but every soul needs to keep in touch with the spiritual interpretation of existence. If the Christian religion is coextensive with human activity, no man has a right to assert that his own particular church is the only possible one.

Intelligent men and women waste so much time in talking about the unessential and technical things, they need to be reminded of the universal element of Christianity. They can build up their own theological systems or accept the statements of some church. It does not matter which they do as long as they cultivate a vigorous personal faith. This book is just a series of black-and-white sketches to show that Christianity covers all elements of life. Religion is not a creation of preachers. It is a necessity of human nature.

E. A. MCA.

**OLD AND NEW
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CHAPTER I

RECENT BOOKS ABOUT LOST CITIES AND CIVILIZATIONS

THERE are times when the usual order of mystery stories, novels about sex complexes and tales of adventure loses its attractiveness. The human mind craves some other kind of stimulus.

Recently, when saturated with fiction, I chanced to read *Digging for Lost African Gods*, by Count de Prorok, *Angkor the Magnificent*, by Miss Candee, *The City of the Sacred Well*, by Willard, and *The Lost Continent of Mu*, by Colonel Churchward. This change of mental diet proved to be both enjoyable and refreshing.

Let me confess at once that I am not an archæologist and that I have no idea what a scientist would say about these books. I only know they are filled with stimulating incidents and suggest problems more fascinating to work on than any cross-word puzzle. Probably the

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most interesting items in the Lost and Found column of life are those which deal with lost races and the buildings they left behind them.

Count de Prorok, in *Digging for Lost African Gods*, tells of his research work in Carthage, Utica, and the desert of Sahara. While every university graduate has some more or less vague idea of Carthage and Utica, few know anything about the ancient cities of the African hinterland. The number of the ruins de Prorok mentions, the magnificence of the buildings and the luxury their inhabitants once enjoyed, all point to a high degree of civilization, which disappeared many centuries ago, in this part of the world.

When the Count tells about finding the tomb of the dancing girl in Utica he touches a romantic chord in every heart. Everyone, from elderly grandfathers to gay young débutantes, likes to read about dancing girls. There is something alluring about their attractions that appeals to a universal interest. The crumbling bones and dainty ornaments of this tomb tell a story of the youth and gayety, admiration and

affection that once centered in this life. Count de Prorok caught the dramatic atmosphere of this last appearance of the danseuse and makes the reader feel it.

Who has not felt a desire to meet face to face some of the legendary characters of folk lore? Think of seeing Helen of Troy or Dido of Carthage! Count de Prorok did not have the good fortune to find either of these ladies in when he called, but he did find Queen Tin Hinan, the legendary ancestress of the Kings of Hoggar. The Hoggar Kings are not as important as the Stuarts of England or the Hapsburgs of Austria. Nevertheless, every legendary ancestress of a royal line is an interesting individual. They all carry the atmosphere of romance and mystery in their powder boxes, and we breathe the air of Walhalla in their presence. I hope the industrious Count will dig up some more details of this lady's life, even if he has to report a few scandals.

Angkor the Magnificent, by H. C. Candee, is an account of a trip to Cambodia, the home of the Khmers. Miss Candee tells many interest-

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ing anecdotes, including one about a sea captain and his mythical Japanese wife. She also tells a pirate story, describes the enjoyment of riding an elephant, and explains the characteristics of the present-day inhabitants of this land of mysterious ruins. The chance companions of the trip lend an amusing atmosphere to the narrative, as they included, among others, the fair Priscilla, who was only a dainty tourist but as wholehearted a man hunter as any tiger in the jungle.

The object of the book is to tell about the Khmers and the marvelous ruins they left behind them. The Khmers were a race who lived in and ruled this country from about 800 to 1200 A.D. They built Angkor Thom and Angkor Vat. After playing their part on the stage of world affairs they retired to the green room for a rest. The ever active jungle immediately saw its chance and swept over the walls of the city and into the sacred precincts of the temples like an invading army. Man must sleep, but Mother Nature never rests.

In time the Khmers and their massive build-

ings were forgotten. One day a naturalist stumbled on them. When he asked the natives who had built these imposing towers and walls, they said they had always been there and were the work of the gods. The people of to-day not only believed the gods dwelt there but proved it by legends.

The Khmer's use of Naga, the serpent, as an architectural feature is interesting. They used a seven-headed serpent in a fanlike arrangement as a newel post, and his body formed the balustrade. I must quote what Miss Candee says about Naga.

If Khmer art had originated no other decoration than this, it should be honored forever in all countries. Here on the stone causeway Naga is seen at his best. His group of lifted heads meets all who mount any of the approaches from the park, and his extended body, finely chiselled, forms the long balustrades.

We cannot dwell upon the massive towers made of cut stone without the use of mortar,

the gallery of dancing girls, or the inspiring nature of the ruins. It takes a book to outline these things, and that is what *Angkor the Magnificent* does.

The City of the Sacred Well, by T. A. Willard, takes the reader a long way from Cambodia, to the jungles of Yucatan. Here we find stone cities and temples built with mortar but now deserted, and with even less known about the men who built them than is known of the Khmers.

This book is the story of one man's investigations. It tells how Edward Herbert Thompson sat by the sacred well and brooded over its mystery. Legends told how the fairest of the Maya maidens and the strongest of their captives had been offered here as sacrifices to the rain god. Mr. Thompson believed the sullen waters of this lonely pool could reveal a strange story of the past. The question was how to read the riddle. Finally he decided to use a steel scoop and tackle to solve the problem. Day after day the scoop brought to the surface only muck and leaf mold. In spite of his discouragement Mr.

Thompson continued the work until his perseverance was rewarded. With the bones of young women between fifteen and twenty years of age, and all of the Maya type, were found the bones of strong men whose skulls showed they were of a different race. Just think of the tragedy and romance, the aspirations and regrets that are revealed by these remnants of a lost people! The legends of the well contain more truth than poetry.

Out of the well from below the muck came not only the bones of those who had given their lives as sacrifices but other things that had been offered to the god. Mr. Thompson found golden basins, disks, ornaments, a hundred golden bells, jade plaques, tablets, ear ornaments with several hundred large and small beads, flint spearheads sharp as a razor, and sacrificial knives, one of which was perfect and had a handle formed of entwined golden serpents.

The chapter on the tomb of the high priest is also of particular interest. Mr. Thompson believes this is the tomb of the fabled Kukal Can, the legendary father of the Mayas. One of the

architectural features of this tomb is of such interest that the passage on it must be quoted :

This miniature temple has a main stairway facing the northeast, and the approach is guarded by twin serpent heads, each a finely carved monolith. . . . The serpent bodies, conventionalized into wide, flat bands, serve as balustrades, extending one on each side of the wide, steep stairway, clear to the temple platform.

It is a far cry from Cambodia to Yucatan but here we find a similar use of the serpent, whose head is used as a newel post and the body as the balustrade. It is similar to but different from the serpent motif of the Khmers.

When I reached this point in reading about lost cities and civilizations I had enough to keep my mind busy in the evening after the family had retired and the study fire was burning brightly. I would puff at my pipe and brood over the mysteries of the past. How did the Khmers of Cambodia and the Mayas in Yucatan hit on the same unique use of the serpent

for newel posts and balustrades? Was it a mere chance similarity, or was there some connection between these races so widely separated by time and distance? Then the question of the jade would force itself upon my attention. I have heard there is no jade in North, South, or Central America. Jade comes from Asia. How did the Mayas get their jade? Could they have had ships capable of crossing the Pacific Ocean? Was it possible that the Bering Sea route with its hostile climate and rugged coast was used to connect these distant places? It was more interesting to ponder over this question than to search for the name of a three-toed sloth in two letters—an amusement that the cross-word puzzle once made popular.

While thinking over these questions of the past I picked up *The Lost Continent of Mu*, by Colonel Churchward. My imagination, which had been smouldering, now took fire. Colonel Churchward's account of how he became intimate with a priest of a temple in India while doing famine relief work and how this friendship led to his finding the tablets that tell

about the land of Mu would make a good plot for a novel.

According to Colonel Churchward the continent of Mu was located in the Pacific Ocean and was five thousand miles long and three thousand miles wide. It was the location of the fabled Garden of Eden. About twelve thousand years ago it was destroyed by earthquakes, volcanoes, and tidal waves. Before its destruction it had a population of 64,000,000 highly civilized people who had been for many years colonizing Central America, Asia, and Africa. The similarities of the civilizations of these various widely scattered countries came from their common origin. The differences they developed were due to a natural response to new environment.

The first reaction of the reader's mind to this book is one of dissent. It is unfortunate that Colonel Churchward believes the continent of Mu was the location of the Garden of Eden, and that man was here created by Divine Command in possession of a high state of civilization. Science, built upon many different lines of in-

vestigation, holds that civilization is the result of experience and development. Men have climbed up from savagery and barbarism. Therefore, Colonel Churchward's contention that men were originally civilized and lost their civilization when Mu was submerged is bound to create prejudice.

It is possible for Colonel Churchward to be mistaken on this question and still to be right as to there once having been a continent in the Pacific.

O'Brien, in *White Shadows in the South Seas*, says:

Darwin's theory is that these islands are the tops of a submerged continent, or land bridge, which stretches its crippled body along the floor of the Pacific for thousands of leagues. A lost land, whose epic awaits the singer; a mystery perhaps forever to be unsolved. There are great monuments, graven objects, hieroglyphics, customs and languages, island peoples with suggestive legends—all, perhaps, remnants of a migra-

tion from Asia to Africa a hundred thousand years ago.

Is it possible that Colonel Churchward has written the epic of this lost continent that O'Brien longed for?

There is a good deal of material in *The Lost Continent of Mu* about symbols and hieroglyphics on which a layman cannot pass judgment. In spite of these technical discussions the book is intensely interesting. It indicates how jade and the other things that have an atmosphere of Asia about them could have reached Mexico and Central America. A continent in the Pacific would have relieved the congestion of traffic, in prehistoric times, over the Bering Sea route. If everything that came from Asia to America came by that road they certainly needed traffic cops to handle the crowd.

As far as this book is concerned it does not matter whether the reader agrees or disagrees with Colonel Churchward. He has written a fascinating book that stimulates the mind and suggests many questions.

Before closing this discussion there is one more problem worthy of consideration. How did these people of an earlier age lose their cities and civilization? This question underlies the books we have been discussing as a foundation does a house. It is involved in mystery and therefore it is a fascinating subject to work on. There were probably several different causes.

One of the forces that operated in widely separated places was the exhaustion following war. The race was worn out by fighting and bloodshed. Bitter factional strife, which frequently follows a disastrous war, gave the final stroke to a crumbling social order. This is the probable explanation of the deserted cities of Africa and Cambodia.

Sometimes a pestilence such as typhoid, typhus, or yellow fever may have decimated a luxurious and enervated race. Some such affliction may have given the jungle its opportunity to reestablish itself in the Maya cities of Yucatan.

Some terrible cataclysm of nature, such as an eruption of a volcano, an earthquake, or a tidal

wave, may devastate a district. Colonel Churchward believes a combination of these forces obliterated the Continent of Mu.

Behind all these different and what may be called direct causes there is one that is easily overlooked but that may be the real reason for this loss.

A civilization, like a fruit, may become overripe. It grows rotten at the heart. Luxury and love of ease steal its virility and vitality. When some great burden is placed upon an overripe race by a disastrous war, internal strife, pestilence, or a cataclysm of nature, the people cannot rise above their afflictions. Civilization is only an orderly manner of living. In a selfish desire to preserve life at any cost, civilization is lost and the survivors revert to barbarism. Religion and morality are the foundations of civilization. Wealth and prosperity are notorious enemies of the simple life and of religious faith. When religion and morality disappear a race loses its resiliency and virility. Any sudden and terrible calamity may sweep away the accumulated culture of generations.

History is filled with accounts of strong and virile races sweeping away the civilization of luxurious and decadent people. The vigorous and conquering nations live simply and are held together and inspired by a common religious faith. Religion not only inspires heroic and strenuous deeds, but it also acts as a cohesive force, uniting each individual to the group and thus increasing the effectiveness of social action.

When wealth increases there is an increased dependence on luxuries; physical vigor is dissipated and religious faith is lost. The priest and prophet no longer deal with spiritual emotions or motives. The temples and ritual, the priests and prophets are all subsidized by the state and used for political ends. Religion is sacrificed to the God of Expediency.

A partial list of the nations that once lived simply, developed a powerful civilization, and then dissipated both their virility and civilization through lascivious and luxurious living includes Nineveh, Tyre, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the Byzantine Empire.

When strong nations or people lose their religious faith, immorality destroys their moral and physical strength. They become a prey to the first enemy that assails them. This enemy may be a primitive tribe of aliens, or some cataclysm of nature, or a combination of both. The strength of the enemy or the severity of the natural catastrophe is the least important element in any threat to national existence; the resiliency of the national spirit is the important element. A people who are bound together by a common religion that means something vital and stimulating to the individual's mind and character, have an ability to overcome enemies and rise above catastrophes that would annihilate a nation enervated by irreligion and immorality.

Many religions have shown their ability to create civilization. Not the least of these is Christianity. Can a religion conserve the civilization it has created? None has yet proved its ability to do this. Even China and India show signs of decay. One of the crucial questions to-day is whether or not Christianity can conserve the civilization it created. Can the Church keep

in accord with the people's growth in intelligence and still preserve its spirituality and mystical power? Can the Church cultivate a moral integrity that is able to overcome man's natural tendency to self-indulgence and lust? Will the people continue to sacrifice their pleasures because of a belief in their ideals?

These are questions worth considering, but they are questions that no one can answer.

Lost cities are pathetic monuments to man's weakness. Is there any power on this earth that can overcome the frailty of human nature? If religion fails, where can men look for help?

CHAPTER II

THE SEARCH FOR SATISFACTION

KIPLING AND "KIM," HUTCHINSON AND "ONE
INCREASING PURPOSE"

MEN are animals, but they have traits of character that differentiate them from all other living things. Christ emphasized these higher requirements of men when He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone."

Food only sustains physical existence, while men require intellectual and spiritual sustenance. A pig is happy as long as the trough is full, because a pig's philosophy is limited to the size of his stomach and the amount of food he can get. But men are not pigs. The human brain is constantly active. A man sees the colors of the sunset and immediately wants to know where the sun goes and why the sky is painted a glowing red. Men look into the starry heavens, and

questions arise at once about the stars and the paths they follow in the sky.

The restlessness of the intellect, which urged men to discover the meaning of life, the relation of cause and effect, and the secrets of nature, has led to the countless experiments and investigations that finally resulted in science. Man wants to know where he came from, why he is here, and where he is going. The persistence of these and kindred questions destroys the peacefulness of a mere animal existence.

The soul of man is restless because it is endowed with spiritual aspirations. No one knows where these aspirations come from or why they are thrust upon the sons of men. Evidently they are an innate quality of personality. While these stirrings of the soul are still unappreciated and undesired they spring up and grow strong. The awakening of the spiritual life is often accompanied by mental unrest, depression, and despair. The unpleasantness of such a state of mind spurs the individual to do something to get rid of it. The activities suggested by the individual's conscience at first seem to be too difficult, and from

the standpoint of physical life the goal they offer does not appear worth the effort necessary to attain it. But in spite of the protests of worldly wisdom and the inertia of human nature, individuals in all ages have followed the gleam and become seekers for spiritual satisfaction. A good digestion, pleasant friends, and enough money to buy the comforts of life do not guarantee happiness. Even at its best, life is unsatisfactory. The things a man possesses are less attractive than the things he desires. Dissatisfaction with daily experience and human attainments is almost universal.

The craving for an unknown element in life that will give satisfaction is the cause of all religion. Religion is an effort to discover an answer to the divine aspirations of the soul. Animals show no signs of being afflicted with spiritual restlessness. If men were merely animals, then when their hunger was satisfied and they were warmly clothed, comfortably housed, with wife and children around them, every instinct would be in repose. If you added to these primary

needs of life the admiration of their fellow men and the social power of political office there would be nothing more to be desired.

It is true some men seem to be content with food and clothes, but the consensus of opinion is, these men do not possess the best elements of character. They are only the hewers of wood and drawers of water, even if they happen to have a large amount of money. Material things are good but they are only good in a limited way.

Other men of strong intellect give themselves wholeheartedly to the solution of problems. They struggle with the questions of health, the production of commodities, and the problems of transportation and distribution. Men of this type are found in the forefront of every effort to improve living conditions, increase productivity, purify civic life, and perfect educational methods.

Observation and investigation indicate that both the hewers of wood and drawers of water and the intellectual leaders fail to discover the

hidden meaning of life, which gives satisfaction and quietness of mind. Restlessness and dissatisfaction prevail in both of these groups. At one extreme you find the workers drifting into Bolshevism and anarchy, and at the other you see intellectual leaders straying into dilettantism and immorality. Mere animal existence does not satisfy the higher qualities of personality.

The men who are most dissatisfied with life become religious leaders. They are the prophets and priests, the mystics and seers of the ages. The personality these religionists develop has a quality that is recognized by the hurrying masses. Religion gives its devotees a calmness of mind that is reflected in their countenances. They possess a mental poise that gives them clarity of vision and sound judgement. They become the counselors and advisers of people with problems, anxieties, burdens, and difficulties.

In his poetry Kipling is constantly touching on "the something more" that is needed to make life satisfying and complete. In "M'Andrew's

Hymn" he tells about a dour Scotch engineer's soliloquy while standing watch at night. The old man remembers the sins of his youth, his sorrows, and the storms he has passed through. His engine gives him an answer to the questions that trouble him.

"The crank-throws give the double-bass, the
feed-pump sobs an' heaves,
An' now the main eccentrics start their
quarrel on the sheaves:
Her time, her own appointed time, the
rocking link-head bides,
Till—hear that note?—the rod's return
whings glimmerin' through the
guides.
They're all awa! True beat, full power, the
clangin' chorus goes
Clear to the tunnel where they sit, my pur-
rin' dynamoses.
Interdependence absolute, foreseen, or-
dained, decreed,
To work, Ye'll note, at any tilt an' every

"Fra skylight-life to furnace-bars, backed,
bolted, braced an' stayed.

An' singin' like the Mornin' Stars for joy
that they are made;

While, out o' touch o' vanity, the sweatin'
thrust-block says:

'Not unto us the praise, or man—not unto
us the praise!'

Now, a' together, hear them lift their lesson
—theirs an' mine:

'Law, Orrder, Duty an' Restraint, Obedi-
ence, Discipline!'

Mill, forge an' try-pit taught them that
when roarin' they arose,

An' whiles I wonder if a soul was gied
them wi' the blows."

The rugged old seaman had found that religion was an essential element of life. The poet makes him translate his spiritual aspirations and the Calvinism he had learned in the kirk as a boy into terms of his engine. Each man must interpret his religious convictions in the terms of his own experience, to make them vital.

Gold has been the symbol of the good to many men in every generation. Kipling appreciates that the important thing in life is not the money that is earned but the joy of creative activity. The poet and artist, the author and sculptor, all earn little money, but they continue their occupations because they cannot help it. They are creating works of art, poems, or books because of an impulse that is stronger than any dictates of reason. They may or may not argue about the whys and wherefores of their work, but a genius continues to produce because he cannot help himself.

In "When Earth's Last Picture Is Painted" Kipling deals with this characteristic of human nature:

"When Earth's last picture is painted and the
tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded, and the
youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie
down for an æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall
put us to work anew."

Eternity itself, in the thought of the poet, can only be understood in terms of creative activity. Many a business man and banker has a tender chord hidden away in his secret soul which throbs in sympathy with this thought. One of these men once said, "The dollars are only counters in the game." He meant that big business men had other interests and purposes in view than the mere making of dollars. It is the joy of doing a good job, of producing a fine product, or financing worth-while enterprises that keeps men tied to their desks long after they have accumulated more money than they can ever use. The joy of creation possesses a spiritual element. It does not matter what the product may be. The farmer has it in his crops of wheat and corn; the manufacturer who rejoices in turning out shoes and socks, automobiles or plows, knows the same thing.

Men who have lost the spiritual conception of life which exalts and stimulates the joy of creative activity in time are sure to lose all they have created. Even their cities and civilizations shall be one with Nineveh and Tyre, for civili-

zation itself rests on a spiritual foundation.

This side of the question is emphasized by Kipling in "Recessional":

"The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart;
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!"

In "Gentlemen-Rankers" and "The Broken Men" Kipling deals with another side of this subject. He shows the bitterness and emptiness of a life after it has lost its higher aspirations. Neither bluff, nor brutality, nor money itself dulls the bitterness of the soul that has lost its higher life. Memory and conscience dog the steps and embitter the lives of the men who have lost touch with their spiritual background—

"But behind our princely doings,
And behind each coup we make,
We feel there's Something Waiting,
And—we meet It when we wake."

In *Kim* Kipling tells the story of a man's search for spiritual satisfaction. *Kim* is not a religious book, but the character and influence of the lama show how spiritual aspirations not only control a man's activities but also how they affect other people.

The lama held an important place, had plenty of money and friends, and a quiet monastery, in his own country, in which to live. None of these things satisfied the aspirations of his soul. He went forth into an unknown country and among a strange people, searching for the River of Salvation. On his journey he met Kim, the orphan son of an Irish soldier. Kim became the disciple and servant of the lama. Kim had grown up on the streets and in the bazaars of Lahore; he spoke the dialects of India like a native, and he could express himself, if stiffly, in English. The whole story is made up of the adventures of this strange couple. The lama's object is to find the River of Salvation, while Kim's one desire is to share the adventures of the lama's journey. The experiences they have on the road

and the friends they make form a fascinating account of Indian life.

Kim's knowledge of India and his familiarity with the native dialects qualify him in a remarkable way for the work of the secret service. The fanciful account of his training for this service after he is discovered by his father's old regiment and friends adds the spice of romance and adventure to the book. But the plot, from beginning to end, is concerned with the lama's search for spiritual satisfaction. The story emphasizes the influence the lama had on all the people he came in contact with, especially upon Kim.

Men with a genuine spiritual aspiration always win the respect of other people. There is something about the personality of a religious genius that the passing crowds recognize. Kipling indicates this characteristic of human nature by showing the admiration and generosity that greeted the lama everywhere he went. On this background of kindliness a few friendships are shown in detail. There is the character of the

old lady of Saharunpore who talked too much but had a heart of gold. She always wanted charms for her grandchildren, but behind her requests was an unbounded admiration for her much-talked-to but honored guest. The mutual respect of Father Victor, the Catholic priest, and the lama is just suggested to show their recognition of each other's personality. The effect of the lama on Mahbud Ali, government agent, horse dealer, Mohammedan freethinker, licentious rascal, and friend of Kim's is more surprising. While Mahbud Ali was incensed at the lama's invitation to join him in the search for the River of Salvation, there was real respect in the old rascal's heart for the purity and strength of the lama's character.

Some men refuse to become spiritual seekers because they are too much interested in the sensual pleasures of life or in the activities of daily business, but all normal men recognize the worthwhileness of a spiritual genius. The personality of religious men wins respect even from those who refuse to follow their example.

Logically a person can take either one of two

positions toward the spiritual interpretation of life. He may recognize its value, and so either become a seeker for the religious solution of his problems, or, if through inertia or weakness he fails to be active in this effort, honor religious men. The other position is one negative toward the whole subject. He can follow the example of the philosopher Descartes and try to discover the meaning of life by following his doubts. Descartes doubted everything but his doubts and then on this foundation built his philosophy. It is an interesting comment on this kind of reasoning that doubters do not appear to find any great degree of satisfaction in their doubts. Their restlessness and dissatisfaction seemed to be increased. They are not particularly good citizens, nor do they reveal unselfishness or loving-kindness toward other men.

Doubts have a real place in the minds of men. Tennyson realized this when he said:

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.”

Doubt in this sense is a step toward a larger and firmer faith. It is a grub hoe which clears away weeds and rubbish so that the good seed can grow. But only a fool plants grub hoes in hopes of reaping a good harvest.

Kim begins with the lama's meeting Kim before the Gates of the Wonder House, and it ends with the lama's discovery of the River of Salvation. While the book is filled with the interesting experiences and adventures of Kim the undercurrent is all about the lama's search for satisfaction. The lama is the type of man who seeks a positive and constructive answer to the problem of all ages: where can the soul of men find satisfaction?

What Kipling did in *Kim* with the background and atmosphere of India, Hutchinson has done in *One Increasing Purpose* with the background of England and the Great War. Major Paris had survived the war. He had seen his best friends and better men than he broken and shattered by high explosives. The question arose in his mind, "Since these men died, for what purpose was I saved?" He came back to

England but was unable to settle down because he was seeking an answer to the question, "Why was I saved?"

He resigned his commission and nominally looked for a position. At the same time he was constantly seeking Elizabeth Glade. She was the one person who had touched a hidden chord in his heart during the war. Simon Paris felt he could talk over his mental unrest with her, though he could not talk to his brothers. When he finally found Elizabeth and explained his mental unrest, she said, "I believe it is of God."

He was frightened at the thought that God was after him, but he could not escape it. It dogged his steps. His affection for Elizabeth now made him desire to make money so as to be in a position to get married.

He asked his brother, Andrew, for letters of introduction to business men and went from factory to factory looking for a position. The more he looked the more his restlessness increased. Everything seemed unsatisfactory. In desperation he gave up his search for a job and settled in a cottage with the Yeomans. Yeoman,

the blind maker of benches to be placed on the hills so the tired wayfarer might rest, influenced him. The Englands, who had family prayers and too much conscience to liquidate their land and enjoy financial ease, stirred his respect.

The way in which his own family in their difficulties sought his advice and rested on his strength is noteworthy.

Finally Major Simon Paris, a man who had never claimed to be religious, became a preacher and the organizer of a religious society. The symbol he used was a ribbon in the buttonhole. Lardy Quinnet, restless and jolly, irresponsible and frivolous, appears at the end of the book wearing one of the Simon Paris ribbons. Lardy summed it all up by saying, "I went to church with my mother as a kid, I shall be buried by the Church; in between I am dashed if I scoff at the Church."

The preachers and theologians may criticize the vagueness of this religious conception. It is vague. Its very vagueness is suggestive.

In *One Increasing Purpose* Hutchinson is trying to interpret the spiritual aspirations of Eng-

land. He is an observer of human nature and knows that people are dissatisfied with theology and creeds, rituals and rites. They crave spiritual life. The impossibility of expressing this emotion or desire in set forms is startling. Men cannot be satisfied with material things. Human nature contains a spiritual potentiality that cannot be denied. Some people in every age have felt this mystical or spiritual urge more than others. The lama in *Kim* and Simon Paris in *One Increasing Purpose* are spiritual brothers; they are seeking a City not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. As long as this desire for spiritual reality resides in the mind and conscience of men, and as long as the mass of men recognize the worthwhileness of these spiritual seekers, real religion, as contrasted with formal worship, holds a place in the life of the individual and of society that nothing else can ever occupy.

CHAPTER III

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

"SCARAMOUCHE," BY SABATINI, AND "DR. JEKYLL
AND MR. HYDE," BY STEVENSON

THE weakness of liberal theology, in my judgment," a prominent surgeon in a great city recently said, "is the lack of emphasis it places on sin."

"I have heard my pastor preach on almost every subject but sin," the doctor continued. "When people lose their appreciation of the enormity of evil and commence to think lightly of sin, religion is reduced to a low ebb."

Whether or not liberal theology is responsible for this situation is a question of personal judgment. The fact remains there has been so much talk of evil as only a negative thing and so much said about iniquity being merely "not good" that many of the younger generation, as well as

their elders, have lost all sense of sin. People think of evil as a lack of conformity to custom and, therefore, in no way morally reprehensible.

Novelists show a deeper appreciation of the enormity of sin than many soft-voiced religionists. These religious teachers talk of the innate divinity of man and of the beauty of character. They forget or overlook the unfathomable possibilities for evil that exist in human nature.

In the play made from Dostoevsky's book *The Brothers Karamazov* the plot shows the dangers that arise from a disbelief in God, religion, and sin. The old rascal and roué, Feodor, asks Ivan, his philosophical son, if there is or is not any God, or immortality. Ivan answers, there is no God and not even a shred of immortality to hope for.

"Why, then—why, then—Ivan! Everything is permissible," Feodor exclaims.

"Yes, Father, everything is permissible," Ivan answers.

"Sh! We won't talk about it. We will keep that to ourselves, dear boy," says Feodor.

The drunken libertine appreciated better

than did his intellectual son the consequences of such a belief. The hardened sinner knows more about the enormity of evil than the theorist.

The tragedy that closes the book centers on the statement of Ivan's that everything is permissible. His half brother, Smerdiakow, the son of Feodor by a drab of the street, overhears this assertion and commits murder. Another brother, Dmitri, although innocent of the crime, is condemned and sent to Siberia for twenty years of penal servitude. In this story Dostoevsky shows how far men fall short of divinity when they lose a sense of sin. The only one of the Karamazov brothers who possesses a pure character is Aliocha, the novitiate of a monastery and a religious man.

Many people are controlled by a desire for self-indulgence. The gratification of their impulses is the only object of their lives. The Gospel of Christ advocates an entirely different conception of life. It emphasizes the need of self-control. The pleasures of the moment are not so important to Christians as the end to be attained. These religionists do not know as much

about the thrills of the emotions as the others do, but they enjoy a quietness and satisfaction that gives them, in the long run, a greater amount of true happiness.

Scaramouche, by Sabatini, is a tragedy with sin as its motive. The book opens with André Louis Moreau and his friend, Philippe de Vil-morin, in conflict with the Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr over the killing of a peasant who had been caught poaching on the Marquis's land. André did not know who his mother was, but believed himself to be the natural son of his godfather, M. de Kercadiou. André's friend, Philippe, was a candidate for Holy Orders and a pronounced revolutionist. The Marquis was a gentleman of the old régime. He was a sensualist, but a man of his word. His culture was a veneer for a hard and brutal materialism. He was an accomplished swordsman and a bachelor whose intrigues with other men's wives were notorious. The Marquis had at last decided to get married and was paying court to the beautiful Aline de Kercadiou, the niece of André's godfather.

Philippe and André met the Marquis at the château of M. de Kercadiou.

The Marquis, angered by the revolutionary sentiments of Philippe, cleverly forced a duel upon the inexperienced seminarian and killed him. André was so infuriated by the murder of his friend that he denounced the Marquis to his face, and when that gentleman admitted he had killed Philippe because of his eloquence, André decided to become the voice of Philippe.

André threw himself into the revolutionary movement and discovered he also had a gift for the eloquence that the Marquis feared. André visited Rennes and Nantes in an effort to obtain justice. The Courts were deaf to his appeals, but he stirred up the mob. The government officials sought to kill him because of his activities, and, therefore, he had to flee.

By accident he stumbled upon a troupe of traveling players. This troupe needed a man, and André joined them as Scaramouche. In their company he knew he had an excellent chance of escaping his enemies. His experiences as an actor make a delightful interlude in the tragedy

that is being developed by the plot of the story. He fell in love with the leader's daughter, Climène, and they became engaged. Under the influence of André, the troupe improved their performances and had a successful season at Nantes. The pretty and vivacious Climène attracted many admirers. Along with others the old roué, the Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr, succumbed to her charms. The poor little actress had her head turned by his elegant manners, immense wealth, and social position. She yielded to his advances and was swept off her feet. When she returned from a night with the Marquis at his château, André, in his bitter anger, stirred up the revolutionary sentiments of the audience and turned them against the Marquis. The play broke up in a riot.

André fled to Paris and succeeded in getting a position in a school of fencing. On the death of the fencing master André took over the school and became a finished swordsman. His Republican friends discovered him in his new occupation. They told André the nobles had developed a system of forcing duels upon the revolutionists

and then killing these inexperienced swordsmen in cold blood. They suggested that he be elected as a delegate to the convention and retaliate by beating the nobles at their own game. At first he refused; he accepted only when he learned that his old enemy, the Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr, was one of the leading duelists. He became a delegate to the convention to punish the Marquis for the dastardly murder of Philippe de Vilmorin. André was challenged several times. In each of these encounters he either killed or incapacitated his opponent. Finally the Marquis challenged him. André's purpose was to kill the old rascal, but the Marquis partially parried one of André's lunges, and instead of being killed the Marquis only had his arm torn open.

At the end of the story the reader discovers the Marquis is André's father. The roué and libertine finally sees how this life, which had sprung from his youthful sin, had been used by fate to rob him of all the things he most desired. André had been instrumental in blocking the Marquis's efforts to marry the beautiful Aline

de Kercadiou, whom the Marquis loved and eagerly desired. It was André's action in stirring up the riot at Nantes that had deprived the Marquis of the pretty Climène, a mistress he was deeply interested in. It was André who destroyed the Marquis's reputation as a swordsman. It was André, as a representative Republican, who took away the Marquis's estates, wealth, and eminent social position.

Scaramouche is a tragedy of sin. The sins of a man's youth have an uncanny way of remaining dormant and finally rising up to destroy all those things that make life beautiful and happy.

All sinners are not as contemptible or absorbed in sin as the Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr. Sometimes people of good character are tempted and yield in moments of weakness to the impulses of their lower natures. Hawthorne recognized this and worked it out in *The Scarlet Letter*. Hester Prynne and Mr. Dimmesdale were both good at heart. They had been tempted and had yielded to the temptation. The result of the sin could not be escaped, and the tragedy at the end was the inevitable result of their weakness.

These books, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Scaramouche*, and *The Scarlet Letter*, indicate how novelists picture the disasters and unhappinesses that always follow sin. If the innocent did not have to suffer with the guilty the question of self-control or indulgence might be left to individual choice. If a man was willing to pay the penalty of yielding to his lower nature, sin might be considered a matter of personal preference. But sin, once indulged in, is beyond control. After an evil has been done the consequences are broadcast and no one can tell how far they will reach or how many innocent lives may be wrecked.

There is another characteristic of sin that prevents it from being considered a mere matter of personal opinion. It is the destroyer of character and also of sound judgment. After a person has yielded to temptation he loses his ability to form correct estimates as to what is right and what is wrong.

Robert Louis Stevenson shows this in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Dr. Jekyll possessed a fine intellect, enthusiasm for scientific investi-

gation, and a desire to hold the good opinion of other people. He had also inherited a large fortune. His life gave promise of being both useful and successful. He was honored by his associates and looked up to by all men. He was known for his benevolent disposition and for the efforts he made to relieve those in distress. This respectable and respected man had, as every man has, another side to his nature. He liked to indulge in sensual pleasures.

Dr. Jekyll's investigations included metaphysical as well as medical subjects. These investigations led him to believe that every life was made up of several different personalities held together in one body. He thought it might be possible to find a drug strong enough to dissolve the connecting link and let loose a kind of character other than the one that naturally controlled the individual's life. He wanted to retain the respect of his professional associates and still indulge his sensual nature. He was torn in two. Finally when his lower nature was in ascendancy, Dr. Jekyll made his great experiment. The drugs worked with a terrific racking of his

nerves and an aching in his bones. His mind was in a chaotic condition during the transformation. His body became smaller and his countenance was changed. Mentally he was alert and sensually he was a beast. There was a suggestion of some physical deformity about his new body which could not be described but which everyone felt. His personality gave forth an atmosphere of evil which repelled people.

The story is made up of the relations and adventures of these two different personalities, which dwelt in one body. While he despised the character and activities of Mr. Hyde, Dr. Jekyll enjoyed sensuality too much to give up this obnoxious personality and its indulgences. The dual position seemed a perfectly safe one. When he tired of the excesses and indulgences of Mr. Hyde, he reassumed the person and character of Dr. Jekyll. He did not consider himself a hypocrite. Dr. Jekyll was very sorry for the cruelties of Mr. Hyde, and frequently Dr. Jekyll spent time and money in relieving the distress Mr. Hyde had caused. Once he found it neces-

sary to double the dose before his transformation was completed, but he was deaf to the warning this should have given him. He continued his double life until, one night, in a wild outburst of fury, Mr. Hyde committed a brutal murder. After destroying all evidences of the close connection between Mr. Hyde and Dr. Jekyll he returned to his home and, taking the required dose, was transformed into the respectable and honored Dr. Jekyll.

After this, Dr. Jekyll knew it was impossible to take on the physical features and character of Mr. Hyde because Mr. Hyde's life had been forfeited to the law. Things went well for a few months. Fear held his lower nature in leash. But the heart and character of the man had not changed; he still loved his sin. One bright winter day, while sitting in the park and mentally licking his chops over the enjoyment of lust he suddenly felt the racking pains of his character transformation. The personality and features of Mr. Hyde rose up out of his mental activities without the aid of drugs and laid their deadly hand on the respectable Dr. Jekyll. He finally

succeeded in getting the drugs necessary to restore himself as Dr. Jekyll.

The story then narrates the efforts Dr. Jekyll made in order to keep from slipping into the features and character of Mr. Hyde. His supply of one of the salts he used to prepare the drug that caused this transformation was becoming exhausted. When he replaced it he discovered the new consignment failed to give results.

It is the old, old story of the good yielding to the evil. Finally the evil reigns supreme.

Under its strange fantasies *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a good account of the dual elements in personality. Every individual born on this earth has a higher and a lower nature. There are moments when it is comparatively easy to follow the good. At other times it is desperately hard to keep the animal side of life from gaining control. Dr. Jekyll said the drug he used was neither good nor bad, it simply established the mental state that was in ascendance at the moment and made it the controlling power of his life, even to the alteration of his features. For a time a person may be able to live honorably and

occasionally indulge in sin, but if a man tries to carry on a dual life, the evil is sure to overcome the good. His moral judgments lose all sense of proportion, and a catastrophe occurs.

In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* Stevenson shows one of the worst characteristics of sin. This is the tendency of evil to overcome and drive out the best elements of character. While the book is only a fantastic tale it is also an allegory of man's struggle against the baser side of life. Unless a person conquers the evil in his nature by unifying his personality on pure and honorable lines, the evil is sure to gain the upper hand and wreck both his individuality and his life.

In the books we have been discussing two truths stand out as danger signals for all who read: first, the innocent must always suffer with the guilty, and second, both character and personality must deteriorate when an individual yields to the subtle influence of sin. We need these warnings. We need the art of the novelist to show us by vivid, startling dramatization that there is no doubt about it: "The wages of sin is death."

CHAPTER IV

"LORD JIM"—THE STORY OF A GUILTY CONSCIENCE

ONE of the most interesting characteristics of human nature is man's subjection to his conscience. It is hardly necessary to ask psychologists to define conscience for us and explain its origin and nature. It may be merely the spirit of "loyalty to loyalty," as Josiah Royce expressed it, or it may be "the typical expression of the herd instinct in the mind of the individual," as Tansley claims in *The New Psychology*.

The investigations of conscience by the psychologists and the discussions of it by philosophers are important for students, but they are of little value in an article like this, as everyone has a clear, if unscientific, idea of what the conscience is and does.

The dictionary is more to the point when it says conscience is "the consciousness that the acts

for which a person believes himself to be responsible do or do not conform to his ideal of right."

The conscience is a guide in moral questions and an arbiter of character that resides in every human being. It plays such an important part in social contacts, sex relationships, and the activities of life in general that it has always held an important place in the masterpieces of literature. A fascinating book could be written on the activities of conscience as revealed in the drama, poetry, and novels. The different ways in which the conscience of the hero and heroine modifies the plot, carries on the story, or furnishes the dénouement would give many interesting illustrations of the importance of this subject from a literary standpoint.

Conscience and religion are so closely related as to be indissoluble. Every religion is so intimately related to the standard of morals it teaches, and the standard of morals established in a community so directly reflects itself in the life of the people, as to make conscientious beliefs an integral part of religious faith.

The consciences of individuals vary according to their education, training, social customs, and environment. It is only necessary to point out the wide difference of standards between a Chinese scholar and an English gentleman, a cultured Mussulman and a banker in Boston, a Hindu philosopher and a Christian minister, to illustrate this point. All these men may be, and for this discussion are considered to be, refined and honest men, but their ideas of right and wrong are as different as they possibly could be.

The conscience may be starved to death by neglect or by the constant ignoring of its commands. I think it was Mark Twain who once told about hearing a squeak in his study. He looked around and saw a wizened-up little pigmy sitting on his bookcase.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I'm your conscience," answered the pigmy. "You have almost killed me but I'm not dead yet." This was merely the humorist's way of saying a man must obey the higher instincts of his mind or else he will lose them.

The conscience condemns the person who fails

to be loyal to loyalty or disregards the herd instinct of his own mind or disobeys the dictates of his higher nature. To be absolutely correct in our statement we should say the pangs of conscience are often very distressing. The familiar quotation, "Conscience does make cowards of us all," is a permissible abbreviation.

In the discussion of Conrad's *Lord Jim* that follows, *conscience* is used to indicate the sense of guilt that resides in an individual's mind after he has yielded to a weakness or committed a sin. *Lord Jim* is the story of a sensitive man who suffered from the pangs of his guilty conscience. He could never forget his one act of weakness. It was unnecessary to have others condemn him for his sin, as he was always condemning himself.

Shakespeare understood this condemnatory element of a man's inner nature and in *Macbeth* he shows how a sense of guilt destroys all peace of mind and creates haunting fears. It was Lady Macbeth's conscience that made her feel her hands were still bloody. Conscience tortures the mind even as the rack tortures the body.

Francis Thompson, in *The Hound of Heaven*, dealt with another aspect of a guilty conscience. In this poem there are no direct references to the sense of guilt rising from the breaking of a law. It tells of the experiences of a soul that tried to run away from God. It breathes the hopelessness of this mad effort. "Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue." When man flees "down the labyrinthine ways" of his mind, God still follows him.

"The unhurrying chase,
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy . . ."

that are emphasized in the poem show how God's love never falters or halts. Many people have had, at some time in their lives, a sense of the persistent following of the divine love. There is no outward evidence of this persistent effort on God's part. It only exists in the mind of those who feel it, and it is the direct result of their religious training. The sense of guilt that haunts these people is directly due to a belief that they have outraged their spiritual susceptibilities.

In a study of *Lord Jim*, it must be admitted that Joseph Conrad never intended the book to have a religious message. He told a story that was suggested to him by seeing a man who had sinned and showed in his personality the marks of his sin and of the suffering it caused. The author's note to *Lord Jim* just mentions this fact and says that the man was "one of us." He was a man with background and character who had made a mistake and had to bear the consequences. The religious message of *Lord Jim* comes through the plot and the analysis of the hero's character under adverse circumstances.

Lord Jim was a clergyman's son who had inherited English traditions and standards of conduct. He had the kind of a conscience that this training develops. He was a handsome, upstanding man who also possessed a vivid and therefore dangerous imagination. His imagination made a seaman of him. As a boy he pictured himself as the hero in thrilling adventures and the conqueror of many dangers.

An accident and the inability to get a berth on a home-going ship forced him to accept the

position of first mate on the *Patna*, an old hulk as badly eaten by rust as a worn-out water tank. It was owned by a Chinaman, chartered by an Arab, and commanded by a degenerate New South Wales German. All the officers on the ship except Jim were a poor lot.

One night, while the *Patna* was running through the Red Sea, carrying a load of eight hundred pilgrims, she struck a derelict or some other floating obstacle. As Jim expressed it, she went over it as easy as a snake slips over a log. Jim was sent to investigate the forepeak and found it half full of water. A rotten bulkhead was the only thing that held the water back and kept the ship afloat. There were not half enough boats to take the pilgrims off. Jim's imagination pictured the panic, the struggle for the lifeboats, the sinking of the ship, and in his ears he heard the shrieks of the drowning. When he returned to the bridge he found the captain and other officers swept away by panic and madly trying to launch one lifeboat to save themselves. He stood apart from them in contemptuous silence. In their mad efforts one of the officers over-

strained a weak heart and died without the others knowing it. When they had finally succeeded in launching the boat they called to their friend, the officer already dead, to jump, as it was his last chance. This call acted as a whip on Jim and without any volition or consideration on his part, he jumped. The whole story as Conrad paints this situation is a marvellous illustration of a mind made quiescent by a vivid imagination and then led to act on an idea that suddenly reaches it. The cry, "Jump, George! We'll catch you! Jump!" reached Jim just when he was least able to resist this appeal.

When Jim and the other officers reached shore they found the bulkhead had held and the *Patna* had not sunk. The disgrace was more than the other officers could bear. One drank himself to death and the others fled. Jim alone, with his head up and his heart breaking, stood trial. The story here shows Jim had the quiet, strong type of character so often developed in England. In his father's home, in the church and at school, he had been taught to play the game. If one broke the rules he must not funk it. A man

showed his manhood by taking his medicine and standing punishment. You cannot understand the character of Lord Jim unless you understand that Conrad was drawing the picture of a strong man who in a moment of weakness or through a peculiar set of circumstances had made a great mistake. Conrad was not picturing a degenerate but a man who was "one of us." This phrase "one of us" is used to depict Jim's character and ideals as those of an Empire-making Englishman.

The plot of the book now centers on how the conscience of a man of this type would act in such distressing circumstances. Jim had failed in a crisis, but he had the courage to stand his trial and take his medicine. His bitterness and regret, his weakness and courage, all stand out. He seemed to desire, by standing his trial, to balance the books. He wanted to forget the whole thing and have the world ignore it. He was not willing to start anew on the basis of his failure and fight his way back to respectability where his disgrace was known. After he had

cleaned house he ran away every time the *Patna* affair cast its shadow on his life.

Captain Marlow, who had become acquainted with Jim during his trial, gave him a letter to an old friend who lived in a big house in an out-of-the-way corner of the East. Jim fitted right into this man's business and life. He was popular at the club and with the people, but he did not tell his new friend the cause of his seeking a refuge there, and so prepared his own undoing. One day the little second engineer of the *Patna* turned up. He found a job in the mill, and when he saw Jim, he winked at him. He told no one about Jim, but he wanted Jim to assure him of a job, as he had had a hard time earning a living since their disastrous experience on the *Patna*. Jim's conscience pricked him and he could not stand it, so one morning, after leaving a note for his host, he precipitately fled.

Captain Marlow next found Jim acting as runner for Egstrom and Blake, ship chandlers. They greatly admired his courage and ability in going out of the harbor through high winds and

heavy seas to meet incoming ships. The firm believed he was one of the best men in the East and everything went smoothly until one day Jim heard a group of sea-faring men in Egstrom and Blake's parlor discussing the *Patna* case and condemning the officers who had deserted the ship as a bunch of skunks. Without a word he dropped his job and fled.

The *Patna* incident followed him wherever he went. He could not rest or find peace while the inner light of his own mind reminded him of his weakness.

He had another unpleasant experience in Bangkok with a cross-eyed Dane who was a first mate in the Royal Siamese Navy. Then Captain Marlow appeared again and introduced Jim to Stein, a man who had business connections in many out-of-the-way places. Stein sent Jim to Patusan, a native town up a small river where there were no Europeans. This station is pictured as literally at the ends of the earth.

Did Conrad overemphasize the effects of a guilty conscience in making his hero continually run away?

Before answering this question we must remind ourselves that Jim had paid the full penalty of his failure and that there was no charge before the courts against him. There was no danger of a detective summoning him to surrender. Sometimes the arm of conscience is longer and sterner than the arm of the law.

I once read a story that was supposed to be true, about a bank clerk who had stolen a large sum of money and fled with it. For eighteen years he was a refugee from justice. He would just get settled in a new city when something happened that convinced him the officers of the law had discovered him. He would immediately fly to another town. After eighteen years of restless wandering his courage failed him. He decided the life he was living was worse than prison. He returned to his native city and went to the police station.

"I have come to surrender myself," he said.

"What for?" the Captain asked.

"For stealing money from the bank eighteen years ago," he answered.

A study of the records failed to show any

charges against him. Further inquiry proved that the directors of the bank had never preferred charges because of the injury it might cause the bank; they had paid the money out of their own pockets. For eighteen years this man had been running away from his conscience.

Any student of crime can discover many incidents similar to this one, showing that a sense of guilt is frequently worse than the punishment of the courts.

The money sent anonymously to the government from unknown individuals shows that the condemnation of a person's own mind frequently urges him to make restitution for unprovable acts of dishonesty.

Jim's early training had educated and developed his conscience to the point where it acted like a goad on him when he failed to play the game according to the rules. The mistake he made was in trying to escape. He was running away from a more relentless enemy than the minions of the law. It is possible for a criminal to evade the sheriff and his posse but no man yet has found a refuge from his own conscience.

The Psalmist knew the impossibility of doing this. His words are as true to-day as when they were first uttered.

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or
whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover
me; even the night shall be light above me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee:
but the night shineth as the day: the dark-
ness and the light are both alike to thee.

In Patusan Jim's character came into its own and he made good. The natives treated him like an uncrowned ruler and gave him the title of Lord Jim. For some years he was successful in his work and admired and honored by the whole community. Just when it seems as if he had lost his sense of guilt the shadow of the *Patna* fell across his life. Conrad was a master hand at fiction and the way he draws the picture of this shadow is marvellous.

We have neither time nor space to do justice to those closing chapters. They must be read as the author wrote them to appreciate the artistic

touch. The lesson is clear. When the shadow of the *Patna* fell on Lord Jim in Patusan there was nowhere left to fly to. His conscience forbade a return to the world. He was already at the farthest limit the bounds of earth afforded. There was just one thing to do and Jim did it. He died in Patusan as a hero should.

It is a mistake to consider Lord Jim a failure. He made good at his trial, as only a man of iron could have faced that ordeal, and during it have won the respect of an outsider as Jim did. His winning of Captain Marlow's friendship during the trial shows his character as nothing else does and makes the reader gasp with astonishment at Conrad's daring and skill in developing and handling the situation.

Jim made good with Captain Marlow's friend and again with Egstrom and Blake. His life and work at Patusan showed his ability to deal with difficult problems and succeed in spite of serious opposition.

Every reader has a right to his own opinion as to whether or not *Lord Jim* is a religious book. I believe it is one of the finest illustrations to be

found in English literature of how sin, through the activities of the conscience, dogs a man's steps and either hampers or defeats him in his efforts to achieve a successful and happy life. If a parable on the consequences of sin is religious, then *Lord Jim* has a powerful message for all men.

CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

“FORTITUDE,” BY WALPOLE

COURAGE interests everyone. From the dawn of history it has been the theme of song and story. Troubadours and minstrels sang of brave men and daring deeds. Poets and storytellers found it a fruitful subject on which to write. Homer's *Iliad* is an epic of heroism and Virgil sang “of arms and the man.” The reader feels in these old poems, songs, and stories that life is more than living and the fear of death is unworthy of a true man. It is ignoble for men to spend their time in estimating the chances of success. They have a task to do, a fight to undertake, or an enemy to overcome. The brave man goes ahead and does the best he can, leaving the outcome to God. When you read old stories in

modern language, as Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* and Howard Pyle's stories of *King Arthur and His Knights*, this is evident.

The courageous man risks wounds, defeat and death in his effort to live a vigorous life. Dumas caught this atmosphere in his story of *The Three Musketeers*. The reader may not admire all of the exploits and adventures of the rollicking heroes, but he rejoices in their courage. They were not afraid to live, and the possibility of death did not destroy their zest for life.

It would be impossible to write a pleasing novel about an arrant coward. Everyone despises cowardice. It cannot be dealt with in any way to win sympathy or interest. Jeffery Farnol recognizes this universal admiration of physical courage, and it is the background of all his delightful tales. It comes out in different ways in *Peregrine's Progress* and *Sir John Dering*, but no matter which one of Farnol's books you read you can be sure of some fist fights or duels that prove the hero's manhood.

While Benvenuto Cellini was a braggart and bully, he was no coward. If he had been a cow-

ard, even his ability as an artist would not have made his autobiography live.

Courage reveals itself in different ways and is capable of an endless variety of treatment.

Some men have no idea of what nerves mean, while others have to fight the hardest kind of a battle in their own minds and souls. A. E. W. Mason interpreted this sort of courage in *The Four Feathers*. Harry Faversham was a nervous boy who was afraid he might be afraid. The opening of the story in his father's house on a night when the veterans of the Crimean War were gathered together paints the background of Harry's blunder. His receiving of the Four White Feathers as a charge of cowardice from the four people who knew why he had resigned his commission; the resolution Harry made, but confessed to no one, that he would make each one of these people withdraw his charge and take back the feather he had given him, makes a delightful story.

There is another kind of courage that is often overlooked. It is the kind Robert Louis Stevenson possessed. He once said something like this

in a letter: "I am made of the stuff soldiers are made from, but God has willed it that my battle should be one with medicine bottles and pill boxes." This is a harder kind of battle to fight than one with 12-inch guns and poisoned gas. It is almost impossible to keep a smiling face and cheerful outlook on life when the enemy that has to be fought is physical weakness and bodily pain. These things sap a man's strength and embitter his mind.

Stripping a hero of all his possessions is no novelty in fiction. Many an author has done it in order to reveal his hero's character and to show how he wins out in his fight with fate. Mason did it in *The Four Feathers*. Henry Kingsley, in *Ravenshoe*, takes everything away from Charles Ravenshoe, even to his name. Hutchinson, in *The Happy Warrior*, robs his hero of his name, property, and then, at the hand of a madman, takes his life. These and many other incidents in the world of books indicate that some authors at least believe life is more than a man's possessions and that the spiritual nature is of more importance than ease and luxury.

Fortitude is a book on courage. While Peter Westcott is the hero, the courage of Peter Westcott is the motive underlying the story. The words of Frosted Moses that Peter heard on the Christmas Eve he was twelve years old stamped themselves on his mind and soul: "'Tisn't life that matters; 'Tis the courage you bring to it." He could never forget these words, and they are the theme running through the whole book.

Peter's courage was early shown by the way in which he received the beatings his father gave him. He was willing to accept the punishment after enjoying an evening in The Bending Mule Inn. His battle with adversity was a long and grueling fight. As a boy the indifference and brutality of his father cast a shadow on his life. His school days were one continual battle until his final defeat, when he tried to whip the whole school on a moral issue. His touching the spirit of his mother and discovering her love just before death snatched her away was a terrible shock. His days in London in the bookshop and boarding house, with their lights and shadows,

friends and writing, were merely days of training for the greatest fight of all.

One incident in London is worthy of notice. It happened one afternoon in Nora's room while Clare was showing Peter some photographs. Suddenly Peter gasped with astonishment and appreciation. The photograph that stirred his imagination and quickened his pulse was one of a statue of a naked man riding a lion. The man's muscles were tense and showed the strain he was under. He had conquered the beast but he had only just enough strength to win the victory. Peter never forgot the impression this picture made. He knew the Rider of the Lion was only able to control the beast by exerting every bit of his strength, with no margin to spare.

While in London Peter's ability to make and hold friends manifested itself. These friends stood by him in his times of need, and their loyalty is one of the cheerful elements of the story.

Peter's marriage and the climax that came through disappointed ambition, the ravages of

death, the desertion and disloyalty of those he loved most—all of this almost broke his spirit, but he finally won his great victory, which was over himself.

All through the story Peter is pictured as fighting with the weakness of his own personality. The enemies Peter had to fight were his inherited tendency to drink, his father's malign influence, and the complexes of his own mind. This is a new set of antagonists for an author to give his hero. They are a more dangerous sort of a foe than a mail-clad warrior or a resourceful villain. Peter's foes were always at his side, as they were part of his own nature. He could not escape them, and they gave him no rest. He had good reasons for fearing his desire to drink, as this vice had ruined both his grandfather and his father before him. Connected with this family weakness was Peter's knowledge that his father exerted a malign and vicious mental influence over him for the purpose of ruining his life.

Peter's high-strung temperament made him susceptible to the "disease of the Terror Lon-

don," which was suggested to him in one of Henry Galleon's novels. He felt that London was a vicious monster, sleeping and occasionally moving in its sleep, only waiting to rouse up and destroy all the people who were living on its back. These mental foes destroyed Peter's peace of mind, irritated his nerves, and cast a shadow on his life.

In the closing chapters Mr. Walpole pictures Peter as hard pressed. The contest is between the Bestial Peter and the Spiritual Peter. His courage was beaten to its knees. He was like a fighter made groggy by repeated and powerful blows. Before the baser elements of Peter's nature could give the finishing blow to his courage, he found Nora at Treliiss. Nora had almost finished her fight with ill health, and her spirit was triumphant. Her influence was just the stimulant Peter needed. He rose above his adversity. His courage revived. Peter cast off the old Peter Westcott as a man throws away a worn-out garment. A new atmosphere filled his mind and soul. The old beast waiting to swallow the people of London was dead. The baser

elements of his nature, with their temptation to drown his soul in drink, had lost their power. The malign atmosphere of Scaw House and his father's vicious influence snapped. Peter's courage was triumphant. He was the Rider on the Lion.

Some readers may complain that *Fortitude* is a sad book. I believe that such a criticism is unjust. If there were nothing in life but bread and butter, marriage and giving in marriage, it might be justified. *Fortitude* is the story of courage and "'Tisn't life that matters; 'Tis the courage you bring to it." Peter's courage is untarnished and at the end unassailable.

It is not pleasant to see a hero stripped of everything he values. Our minds are so filled with the consideration of material things and wealth, friends and family, social position and power, that we shrink from their loss. The author leaves Peter with his naked soul. Life has conquered the things that threaten its higher existence, and the soul is triumphant.

Fortunately few people have to face the continuous buffeting of fate that Peter received.

Many people do receive hard blows from adversity, which stagger them, and they feel they have reached the limit of their strength. Sometimes they have, but more often these individuals have not suffered as much as they think they have. Much, and more than they realize, remains in their possession. It is only at rare intervals we meet a person who has been deprived of wealth, friends, and health at the same time. Occasionally in the journey of life a wayfarer is met who has been scourged by sickness, robbed of all his possessions, and wrecked in his ambitions. When we meet such a one our hearts shudder in sympathy. If such ill fortune should overtake us where could we find the courage to rise above it?

One of the interesting things in *Fortitude* is the vague, intangible, and yet unmistakable way in which Peter gropes for a religious background and hope. Religion in some form is essential to every man who has to meet the buffeting of fate. If bread and butter is all and if Fate is the arbiter of life, existence has no meaning, purpose or goal. We are sparks lit up for

the moment to go out in chaos. Morality does not exist, struggling is useless, attainment is a chimera.

An unknown author many centuries ago faced this problem and wrote an epic on suffering and courage. His poem is found in the Book of Job. Job was stripped of his possessions, health, friends, and family. He was an outcast on the village ash heap, but Job was greater than the things he had once possessed. Everything came back to him when he had proved his integrity. *Fortitude* ends differently. Peter is a stronger, finer, and better man after his struggles. His reward came through spiritual attainment rather than in material things.

Life is more than a man's possessions. Spiritual souls of all ages prove this. The men whose lives have counted for most were often those who had the least. Isaiah and Amos, Peter and Paul, Socrates and Christ were not noted for their wealth.

The confidence of faith and the attainment of great souls who have suffered and struggled for spiritual ideals, is the element of life most

needed to-day. Our eyes are holden by our material possessions. Happiness and money are not synonymous. Behind disappointments, sorrow, death, and defeat there is a God and immortality.

Fortitude paints the background of life showing that without God and a soul man is worse off than the beasts which perish. The beasts suffer in dumbness and ignorance; man suffers with his spirit as well as his body and he has a mind that increases, prolongs, and multiplies pain a thousand fold. His nervous system intensifies his disappointments and aggravates his pain.

Some years ago I read a story that made a deep impression on my mind. The name of the story and the author are forgotten, but one incident is still vivid. A young Quaker was impressed with the personality and strength of one of the older women in the Society of Friends. Her calmness and peace influenced everyone who came in touch with her. She was his ideal of strong womanhood. In time he learned the story of her girlhood. She had passed through temptation and tumult. Fiery trials and adversity had been her portion. The calmness and

peace of maturity had been bought by her victory over herself and her environment.

So it is with all great personalities. They have paid the price of their victory over themselves by hard struggles and unflagging courage. Peter too had paid the price.

In one way *Fortitude* is an unfinished book. Peter at thirty is too young to show the spiritual fruits of his victory. I wish Mr. Walpole would write a sequel. Bobby Galleon's baby would make a good hero. In the background we would have Bobby and Alice, Cards and Clare. How would their personalities stand the test of the Great War? Through it all could run the story of Peter's personality and influence: Peter, the Rider of the Lion; Peter, the author of great books; Peter, rising like a rock in the chaos of war and bloodshed; Peter, loving the younger generation in their excesses because he knew their temptations, and guiding them to a better and stronger life. Peter's courage survived the catastrophes of youth, but we should like to see him at forty and fifty using the personality he

had won by his bitter struggle for the benefit of others.

Fortitude as it stands is a valuable contribution to literature on courage. The desire to know more about Peter and his influence is a compliment to Mr. Walpole for creating this interesting character.

CHAPTER VI

TENNYSON AND IMMORTALITY

MANY people believe Christianity's only object is to arouse the peaceful conscience of individuals into an aggressive and unpleasant activity. One comic paper satirizes the preachers as being anti-saloon, anti-gambling, anti-theatres, and Aunty-Everything. This parody on the activities of the Church shows that cartoonists are as poor theologians as ministers are humorists. Although religion should be a tonic to man's conscience and a stimulant to his appreciation of social responsibilities, its real object is more fundamental in human life than this caricature indicates. True religion deals with the problems and activities, hopes and sorrows indigenous to existence.

There is a widespread feeling abroad that life should be beautiful, healthy, joyous, and entirely satisfactory. This feeling is too vague to be

called an idea; it is, rather, a mental impression produced by a racial desire for health and happiness. While individuals admit their own lives are incomplete, still the impression remains vaguely yet firmly intrenched in their subconscious minds that others enjoy all the blessings of existence. Their own lack of attainment is believed by these dreamers to be due to unfavorable circumstances, peculiar to themselves, which are either struggled against or breed a rebellious spirit.

When men and women use their powers of observation or widen their experience by contact with their fellow men, they discover that their hope of perfect happiness was merely a youthful daydream, which was delightful while it lasted but which lacked all elements of reality.

Life is bitter and strenuous. Death stalks behind the flowers of spring and the autumnal beauty of fall. Many people whose possessions seem to assure them of happiness have a canker-worm in their hearts, breeding bitterness. At best a joyous life hangs on a slender thread, as a robust constitution is no assurance of continued

health; wealth has an unseemly way of developing wings and flitting away; political power is lost overnight by the whims of a crowd psychology, which overturns the best laid plans and ruins the most constructive programs; beauty of face and form is swept away by disease or with the passing of the days.

Religion, to be of any real value, must contain within itself a solution for these problems and a power able to overcome them. If all lives were healthy and everyone were beautiful; if there were no broken hopes or disappointed ambitions; if there were no ruined homes or wrecked lives, there would be no need of religion. Life would be complete, and heaven would be a present reality.

One of the cataclysms that time brings is death. While man is young and healthy, physically sturdy and mentally strong, death seems a distant and vague possibility that contains no element of interest for him. It is an unpleasant subject which he leaves to the sick and aged, to the clergyman and physician. It is so disagreeable to the mass of people they try to ignore or

forget it. Suddenly a shock comes. Death strikes a relentless stroke which hits the innocent as well as the guilty. A loving husband is snatched away from a frail wife and little children. The friend who shared our innermost thoughts and ambitions, tastes and activities, is smitten down in his youth.

Death is the one disaster for which life has no compensation. The loss of health may be a passing misfortune, as many people are ill for a season and later enjoy strength and vigor. The loss of wealth makes a man redouble his efforts to win it back, and the number of people who have suffered financial reverses only to win a competency or even wealth removes all hopelessness from this misfortune. Death is different. It is the end of companionship, and the loss is irreparable. New friends may and probably will be made, but the one who has died has gone. The peculiar intimacy of soul with soul that came from this particular personality can never be renewed.

Everyone who has experienced bereavement has learned to appreciate the unsatisfactory

quality of sympathy. Once an old clergyman lost his beloved child. A parishioner called on him to offer his condolences. "All my life I have been trying to bring comfort to those in sorrow," his pastor said, "and I never knew what grief was until now." He was grieved to realize how insufficient his efforts had been because he had failed to appreciate the bitterness of the souls he ministered to in the hour of bereavement.

Disappointment and sorrow have a constructive function in life. They have a refining and deepening influence on character and give a power of expression and a vigor to activities that are remarkable.

Madame Schumann-Heink once said when criticizing a young artist, "She has a remarkable voice and the promise of a wonderful career, but she will not attain her full power until she has experienced more of the joys and sorrows of life." The finest possibilities of attainment come only to those whose lives have been tempered by pain.

Shelley knew there was something in pathos that touched a deeper note of interest than any

theme of happiness could possibly reach, and he emphasized it by saying, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

One critic has said, "Had Tennyson never been a mourner he might never have been a great religious teacher."

While we admit sorrow deepens human nature and broadens life, liberates hidden talents and increases the individual's influence with men, this desirable result does not make grief any easier to endure. It gives no help when death threatens a beloved relative or friend. The loss is too intense and personal to be eased by a smug assurance that out of the pain we shall gain a profit.

Philosophy gives cold comfort to the person who has lost a loved one. It is only the young and healthy who find inspiration in a poem like Bryant's "Thanatopsis." There is a grandeur about the language and thought that stirs the pulse when we think about—

"The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm where each
shall take

His chamber in the silent halls of death. . .”

but there is nothing in this sort of poetry that is able to heal a broken heart or bring peace to those who have suffered bereavement.

At such times the human mind yearns for a word of comfort with a longing that should not be denied. After the death of his son, Thomas Huxley wrote a letter to Charles Kingsley that shows how little comfort scientific knowledge has to give to the bereaved. The letter is marked by a gentleness and courtesy surprising to the reader who has known Huxley only through his polemic writings, but the best it reveals is mere dumb submission to the inevitable. The memory of the companionship we enjoyed with one who has died is poor food for daily consumption. It is like trying to feed a hungry body with thoughts of last year's Thanksgiving dinner; instead of allaying the appetite, it only aggravates a desire for the thing we lack.

This yearning for help is so intense that some men of outstanding ability and character like Sir

Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle have turned to spiritualism. Both of these men suffered the loss of those they dearly loved. They longed for some assurance their loved ones still lived. While everyone sympathizes with the sorrow that led these scholars to accept the conclusion they reached, most people find the arguments of *Raymond* and *The New Revelation* unsatisfactory. Many of these bystanders have no religious objection to spiritualism. They are perfectly willing to accept it as the truth, provided its claims are substantiated. But there are many disappointing things about mediums: the trivial nature of the messages received from beyond the grave and the possibility of mental telepathy playing a part in the proceedings are sure to create doubts. The whole subject of psychic phenomena is a fascinating one; but while we recognize the importance of the work being done by investigators we cannot admit the claims made for spiritualism and its power to assuage grief.

There can be no question as to humanity's need of help in meeting the problem of death.

Can the Gospel of Christ meet this issue fairly and squarely and give the sufferers relief? I believe it can, for if it fails here the failure would be disastrous. Unfortunately, many people outside of the Church have an erroneous idea of the Gospels. They have either lacked a religious training in their youth or else they have been prejudiced by criticism or grown indifferent through carelessness. The Bible is an unknown book, and its message is lost to them because of their ignorance. They have never assimilated its message and have no spiritual strength with which to meet a heartbreaking, mind-rending loss. The story of how one great man passed through the valley of the shadow of death and came forth in victory may help some of those who mourn to find a new meaning in Christianity.

Alfred Tennyson, while still a young man, lost his nearest and dearest friend, Arthur Hallam. The shock of this loss caused him to write "In Memoriam." The poem narrates a personal experience interpreted from the standpoint of humanity. As Tennyson said :

This is a poem, *not* an actual biography. . . The different moods of sorrow as in a drama are dramatically given, and my conviction that fear, doubts, and suffering will find answer and relief only through Faith in a God of love. "I" is not always the author speaking of himself, but the voice of the human race speaking through him.

In spite of this assertion Tennyson was so conscious of the personal element in "In Memoriam" that he had it published anonymously.

I have no intention of going into a detailed analysis of his spiritual struggles as they are revealed by the passing of the years and in the stanzas of the poem. It is enough to know that "In Memoriam" is the story of a real and desperate conflict with doubt, sorrow, and despair. Tennyson sums up this conflict in the words:

"Like Paul with beasts I fought with death."

His conclusions are found in the prologue which was written seventeen years after his loss. But it is a mistake to say it took Tennyson seventeen years to solve his problem. It was only after this

period of time he gave complete poetical expression to the effects of faith in his life.

In the prologue he shows how doubt, despair, and hopelessness have been conquered by faith, and that that is something which science and philosophy could not do.

“Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

“Thine are those orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

“Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou has made him: thou art just.

“Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

"We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: Let it grow."

Tennyson had discovered that Christian faith has a vital meaning and practical value which are often overlooked.

It is hard to define just what is meant by faith in this spiritual sense. The thoughts needed for a clear understanding of its meaning elude the words used in the definition. It may be interpreted as an attitude of mind toward life based on a confidence in God's reality, His love and His guiding purpose in human affairs. Faith, when thus understood, gives to the one who possesses it confidence and courage based on a spiritual appreciation of the meaning of existence. Faith is able to meet the test of life's dark-

est hours and give an answer to the otherwise insoluble mystery of death.

The elements of Faith appear as soft and diaphanous as filaments of silk. Each one in itself seems so frail as to be almost intangible. The mysterious and mystic element of religion is only realized when we see the elements of faith woven into a unified conception of life that a man can lay hold of. Delicate and fragile as the separate strands unquestionably are, when joined together they have a strength and elasticity no grief can break. "In Memoriam" is the story of how one man wove out of his own experience an appreciation of religion that helped him in his desperate need.

Faith comes through a cultivation of religion. This faith does not require a man to stultify his mind to the inane communications of mediums, or harden his heart by the cold logic of philosophy; it urges him to live. The life it exalts is not the sensuous satisfaction of the lower nature, but one of fellowship, kindness, and loving service. The Gospel is not "Aunty-Everything": it is rather the gateway to a full development of

the individual's best possibilities and the hope of a continued existence beyond the grave.

This is the assurance faith created in Tennyson's mind. Just before his last illness, he said :

The life after death is the cardinal point of Christianity. I believe that God reveals Himself to every individual soul; and my idea of Heaven is the perpetual ministry of one soul to another.

There was no fear, no doubt, no uncertainty when he faced the end of his earthly existence. The hope he had expressed in "Crossing the Bar" stood the test of his own experience, and he could say with confidence:

"I hope to see my Pilot face to face,
When I have crost the bar."

This faith, which solved Tennyson's problem and eased his heartache, was once the inspiration of the apostles and martyrs. Many years before Tennyson was born they preached Christ without fear or apology. Frequently those who accepted their message had to die in the arena.

If death was the end of human hopes how could the disciples of Christ urge anyone to listen? Faith in immortality opened the eyes of those who recognized its power to a new conception of life and gave them a confidence that overcame the fear of death. "In Memoriam" interprets this hope in the language and experience of a later age, but it merely reëmphasizes the Gospel for people who have ignored, overlooked, or forgotten the supreme importance of Christ for the sons of men.

Those who rest their hopes of immortality on the power of Christ know what Paul meant when he said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

This is the spirit that inspired Tennyson to close "In Memoriam" with these words:

"Whereof the man, that with me trod
This planet, was a noble type
Appearing ere the times were ripe,
That friend of mine who lived in God,

“That God who ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.”

CHAPTER VII

THE SORDID OR THE RADIANT LIFE

"MAIN STREET" BY LEWIS, AND "IN THE HEART
OF A FOOL" BY WHITE

SMALL towns appear commonplace to visitors from a city.

On a Saturday afternoon some years ago I was walking through a rural town of the Middle West with a group of friends.

"I see the Saturday Club is in session," one of the visitors exclaimed, as we passed a group of men pitching horseshoes.

"Saturday Club!" one of the local men answered. "That is the Everyday Club. Those are farmers who sold their farms in the recent boom, and they pitch horseshoes every day. Last winter they even rented a room so as to continue their game during the inclement weather."

A man who has golf, tennis, and automobiling

in the summer time; and bridge, music, theaters, and lectures in the winter, cannot help feeling the narrowness of outlook of men who know only one, and that a boyish, sort of recreation.

In *Main Street* Sinclair Lewis tells the story of American town life. The location he chooses is Gopher Prairie, a small town in Minnesota. Into this commonplace atmosphere Dr. Kennicott brings his bride, Carol. Carol is an idealist married to a hard-headed and simple-hearted family physician. She comes to Gopher Prairie filled with enthusiasm for social reform, culture, and a desire for beauty. Every sordid element from the gloomy old furniture in the doctor's house to the ugly buildings on Main Street, filled with unshaven farmers and their colorless wives, is shown in detail. The tawdriness of the moving picture theater and of the social life of the community with its formal and stilted parties is dwelt on at length. Everything is unattractive.

The plot of the story is found in Carol Kennicott's rebellion against the drabness of life. Nothing appeals to her. She can find no outlets

for her idealism. The doctor has his profession, and, as recreation, hunting and fishing. Carol has no enthusiasm for housekeeping, and social intercourse with the other women is only a bore, as slander and gossip, housekeeping and servants, children and illness are their only topics of conversation. Carol can get no one to sympathize with her desire to beautify the town and improve its entertainments. Things are as they always have been, and thus they must remain.

Carol sees only the mediocrity of the people with whom she is thrown. They are narrow and ignorant, bigoted and uninteresting. Their enjoyments are tawdry and their tragedies pathetic. While her relations with the doctor are pleasant and kindly, there is no kinship of soul, no sympathy of outlook, and no true partnership in their life's work. Carol's poetry, social philosophy, and idealism sound to her husband like the jargon of a Chinese philosopher. It is incomprehensible. Carol cannot see the heroism and constructive elements in the doctor's life. He is only dealing with unattractive bodies, and she cannot appreciate the spiritual significance

of his work. Her final rebellion and flight are the natural consequence of her dissatisfaction and unrest. She takes her baby and goes to Washington in a desire to live her life in more congenial surroundings.

Carol spends two years away from home. During this time she tries to fill her mind with the sights, sounds and colors her nature craves. She discovers that Washington contains a large streak of Main Street, and she begins to understand what Dr. Kennicott meant when he once said the people of Gopher Prairie are a "lot of pretty good folks working hard and trying to bring up their families the best they can." *Main Street* ends with Carol back in Gopher Prairie still struggling with the unattractive local conditions.

Sinclair Lewis has done his best to picture American town life. But the only thing he can see is the materialistic and obvious side of things. This is all Mr. Lewis's intelligence comprehends. This is clearly proved when you supplement his picture of Main Street with the opinion he expresses of the Church and ministers in

Elmer Gantry. In *Elmer Gantry* the Church is made up of mealy-mouthed weaklings, and ministers are only morons, sensualists, hypocrites, and politicians. This book is not even a good caricature of Christianity. It is only an unintentional exposé of the author's unclean mind. It emits the odors of a cesspool. No wonder Main Street is sordid and drab to Mr. Lewis. Without religion life is dreary and hopeless. The bitterness of Mr. Lewis's denunciations of the Church robs them of their harmfulness. Probably *Elmer Gantry* will do more good than harm, as an opponent only has to show sufficient acrimony and bitterness in attacking an established institution to create for it friends instead of enemies.

There are other students who hold a different opinion as to the Church's function in society from that expressed in *Elmer Gantry*. About twenty-five years ago, in a seminar class in sociology at Columbia University, one of the students made some derogatory remarks about the Church. "Think what you will of the Church," Prof. Franklin H. Giddings said, "but remember one thing, the best people in the com-

munity have always been in the Church and they will always be found there." This opinion of America's leading sociologist is worth as serious consideration as the vapping of a novelist. The Church could not do the work it does if it were only composed of morons and hypocrites. Main Street is only sordid when religion is overlooked. The inhabitants of rural and backward communities find the radiancy of life in the spiritual significance of commonplace things.

It is impossible for anyone to discover the significance of a phenomenon he cannot see. A person who is color blind cannot discuss intelligently Turner's great paintings or the coloring of a sunset. He is blind to color and, therefore, the significance of color is lost to him. Mr. Lewis has no idea or appreciation of the part religion plays in life. He does not understand it and, therefore, he cannot appreciate it. Even ignorant men know there is something called religion, but they have the most distorted and erroneous ideas as to what it is. In religious matters Sinclair Lewis must be classed as an *ignoramus*.

The spiritual interpretation of existence is the introduction of a new light to dreary surroundings. One day a pastor who had recently preached a sermon on "Our Castles in Spain," in which he pictured the spiritual beauty of daily drudgery, called on an old German washerwoman in his congregation. "Oh, Docteur," she exclaimed, "dose kassels in Spain. I luk ub vrom de tubs und I see dem. Dey brighten de vashing." This poor old soul had caught a vision from the sermon that lightened her daily toil and illuminated her dreary life.

Mr. Lewis cannot understand this side of Christianity, and his books are handicapped by his limitation. The picture he gives of Gopher Prairie is correct in its details but it is lifeless. It is only a death mask—a true likeness after the life is gone.

In *In the Heart of a Fool*, by William Allen White, we have another book that deals with the people of Main Street. The story tells about the pioneers who settled the town of Harvey shortly after the Civil War. It is an account of the growth and prosperity of an Ohio town. The in-

habitants are plain American people, with all the weaknesses and vices of their generation. It is a picture of a community during the period in which wealth was increased by the discovery of natural resources, and democracy had to struggle with new problems and dangers.

The characters are all types. Dr. Nesbit, genial and shrewd, is best known as Old Linen Pants, the political boss who bought and sold men's votes even as a grocer does tea and coffee. Laura, the doctor's daughter, is the refined woman who, after a catastrophe in her home life, found happiness in the work of a kindergarten among the children of her poor and unfortunate neighbors in South Harvey. Henry Fenn is the man who has to fight with a love of liquor, one of the curses of his times. Daniel Sands is the money-worshipping banker. Tom VanDorn and Margaret Müller are sensualists. Tom believes all religion is a myth, and that wealth, power, and sensual indulgence are the only worth-while things in life. Margaret follows her sensual impulses and tries to cloak them with every new religion that appears on the horizon. Mr. Dex-

ter is the minister who endeavors to meet the social problems of his times constructively and courageously. He is willing to open his pulpit to strange social doctrines with which he is not in full sympathy because of a desire to make Christianity a living power in a new age. Grant Adams is the prophet who knows that the only hope of the wage earner in the new industrial conditions is to be found in organization and coöperation.

Laura Nesbit, in a conversation with her father, gives expression to the new social gospel when she says, "I am sure of this, that the thing which will start South Harvey and all the South Harveys in the world out of their dirt and misery and vice is not our dream for them but their dreams for themselves." This is a good exposition of the ideals of the social settlement movement and other efforts for social betterment that grew up during this period.

Tom VanDorn is, of course, the fool—the man who said in his heart, "There is no God." The hollowness of his successes, the mistakes of his life, and the bitterness of his last days are

given in detail. The whole book is a parable. It is a story of the immorality, sensuality, and crassness of American life. Out of this muck great characters have been developed and great ideals have come to life.

Mr. White, in *In the Heart of a Fool*, has tried to depict the sordidness of life in a Western town during the period between the Civil War and the World War. Mr. White holds that idealism was not dead during this dark and trying time but was rather an undercurrent in the life of the people. This idealism came into full power in the children of the generation under consideration.

Tom VanDorn's daughter and Margaret Müller's son have finer characters and higher ideals than their parents.

In its sordidness *In the Heart of a Fool* is comparable with *Main Street*. But there is one noteworthy difference. Mr. White sees the importance of the spiritual elements underlying the distressing situation he depicts, whereas Mr. Lewis sees only blankness and despair.

In the Heart of a Fool finds a complement in

Old Chester Tales, by Margaret Deland, even as *Main Street* does in *Elmer Gantry*. The characters in *Old Chester Tales* are inhabitants of Main Street, but their experiences are essentially different from those of the people Mr. Lewis tells about. All the stories of Old Chester are colored by the personality and character of the old Minister, Dr. Lavendar. His religion and kindliness illuminate the drab lives and petty-mindedness of his people with a spiritual light. When sin, sordidness, and narrow-mindedness come into contact with Dr. Lavendar a new meaning is revealed and a new atmosphere is introduced. Dr. Lavendar, with his orthodox theology and human sympathy, is a better composite picture of American ministers than Sinclair Lewis gives in *Elmer Gantry*.

Old Chester Tales gives as true a picture of some communities as *Main Street* does of others. Both authors recognize the weakness of human nature. There are as many gossiping women and sordid situations in Old Chester as there are in Gopher Prairie. In one story Dr. Lavendar is asked whether or not the woman who

sinned in her youth and is now married to a good man, with loving children and home, should tell her husband about her past. Another problem that is suddenly thrust upon the rector is: who has the most right to a little girl, the mother who deserted her illegitimate baby or the mother who supplied the child with a home and loving care? Margaret Deland deals with these problems from the standpoint of the spiritual significance of life, while Sinclair Lewis sees only the sensuality and vulgarity of people.

Main Street is sordid only when it has no religion. True religion is a creator of radiant lives in all sorts of places and in every kind of circumstances.

If we think of *Main Street* and *Elmer Gantry* as being a death mask of small-town life, *In the Heart of a Fool* and *Old Chester Tales* are portraits in oil. A death mask loses the significance of the soul, while a Mona Lisa or any good portrait suggests life.

The country church has given too many strong men to the nation to be spoken of lightly.

Both Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson were the products of small-town parsonages.

When an author speaks of the Middle West as being only sordid and narrow, he overlooks the fact that out of the crude and uncultured towns of this section have come many idealistic and socialistic movements. These movements may indicate a lack of sound judgment on the part of their advocates, but they prove beyond question that idealism is not dead.

Church Street, by Miss Jean Carter Cochran, is a good supplement to *Main Street* and *In the Heart of a Fool*. But the reader should note one important difference. Whereas *Main Street* and *In the Heart of a Fool* are fiction, *Church Street* is an account of Miss Cochran's life as a little girl in the manse of "The Hill Top Church." There is no sordidness in *Church Street*. Every line of it glows with spiritual light. All the characters are illumined by the eternal energy that underlies human experience. Daily drudgery is touched with the light of God. *Main Street* can be illumined and glorified. This illumination which eliminates sordidness comes from God.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY

"HYPATIA," BY KINGSLEY

CHARLES KINGSLEY was a militant Christian. Whenever he saw a wrong he fought it. His weapon was not the sword or spear of a Crusader but the pen of a versatile writer.

In the turbulent days of 1848, when England was racked with the Chartist movement, Kingsley left his quiet rectory at Eversley and went to London, the center of unrest and danger. He went as a friend and advocate of the working man. Over the signature of "Parson Lot" he wrote a number of placards and tracts defending the Chartists. The best known of these pamphlets is *Cheap Clothes and Nasty* which remains to this day a classic exposure of the iniquities of the sweatshops.

In order to interest people in the cause of social reform Kingsley wrote two novels on the economic conditions of England. The first, *Yeast*, told about the lives, sorrows, and burdens of the village laborers. Kingsley had a first-hand knowledge of these conditions from his work as a country clergyman. The second, *Alton Locke*, is a story of a tailor in a London sweatshop. The study of the city slums and the lives of the workmen that had produced *Cheap Clothes and Nasty* furnished all the material needed for *Alton Locke*. Both these novels were widely read. They stirred up much criticism. In fact, Kingsley found it difficult to get a publisher for *Alton Locke*, because the firm that had brought out *Yeast* felt that this book had hurt its reputation.

Westward Ho!, which is probably Kingsley's best known book, was also written with a definite purpose.

He was bitterly opposed to what he thought was Roman Catholic propaganda, carried on under the able leadership of Cardinals Manning and Newman. Kingsley believed that the Cath-

olic emphasis on a monastic life was a direct blow at the family and nation. The family and nation were, in his judgment, the foundation stones of a sound social order. His convictions on this subject are outlined at length in the preface of *Hypatia*. This should be read thoughtfully; it makes clear the reason for the attacks on the Catholic Church that occur in many of Kingsley's novels.

Westward Ho! is not merely a story of adventure, for, while it is an account of the bold mariners who carried the English flag to the Indies in the days of Good Queen Bess, it also emphasizes the religious faith of these men and holds up to contempt the intrigues and plots of the Roman Catholics. The story deals at length with the horrors of the Inquisition and arouses the reader's antagonism toward Catholicism. *Westward Ho!*, because of its historical background and delightful atmosphere, deserves recognition as an adventure story, but the author's underlying purpose should be recognized.

Besides being a popular, though much criticized, author and a preacher of ability, Kings-

ley was a scholar of no mean attainments. He held the chair of Modern History at Cambridge and was a friend of Darwin, Huxley, and other scientists. Kingsley's understanding of science and his knowledge of history gave him excellent preparation for writing an historical novel.

Hypatia is an authentic account of people who lived and labored in a critical period. The story is laid in the city of Alexandria, in the Fifth Century. Kingsley says:

A picture of life in the Fifth Century must needs contain much which will be painful to any reader, and which the young and innocent will do well to leave altogether unread. It has to represent a very hideous, though a very great, age; one of those critical and cardinal eras in the history of the human race, in which virtues and vices manifest themselves side by side—even, at times, in the same person—with the most startling openness and power. One who writes of such an era labours under a troublesome disadvantage. He dare not tell

how evil people were; he will not be believed if he tells how good they were. In the present case that disadvantage is doubled; for while the sins of the Church, however heinous, were still such as admit of being expressed in words, the sins of the heathen world, against which she fought, were utterly indescribable; and the Christian apologist is thus compelled, for the sake of decency, to state the Church's case far more weakly than the facts deserve.

Kingsley's purpose, to picture the Fifth Century so as to teach the Nineteenth Century its spiritual and moral lessons, was one exceedingly difficult to accomplish, and it is surprising that he succeeded.

Hypatia is composed of a number of contrasts. The quiet industry and fellowship of the monks of The Laura is contrasted with the life of a great metropolis, with its intrigues and riots, debauchery and luxury, its games and formal church services. In Alexandria you see the degeneracy of the East and the virile Goths, the

prostitutes and philosophers, the politicians and the Jewish money lenders. It seems like a seething inferno compared with life at The Laura.

The characters of the novel are all types. Hypatia, beautiful and chaste, was the finest product of philosophy. The value of scientific research and the love of knowledge are emphasized in her. The limitations of philosophy are shown in the students who attended Hypatia's lectures; they developed no ability to apply their philosophy to life and overcome sensuality and human weakness. They argued and discussed intellectual problems without end, but remained effeminate and immoral.

While Hypatia is presented as the flower of pagan culture and philosophy, Orestes, the Prefect, is introduced as another product. He is the politician and sensualist. He does not know what sincerity or truthfulness means. His selfishness and ambition go hand in hand with his cowardice and love of luxury. He is either a pagan or a Christian, as the exigencies of the moment require.

Miriam, the money lender, slave dealer, and

panderer to the rich, is another type of character developed by the degeneracy of the period. She was a shrewd woman of business and a charlatan. She could drive a good bargain and play on the superstitions of the noble Hypatia.

The lovely Pelagia, courtesan and butterfly, was created by a degenerate social order. Sold as a child into slavery, and without any moral training, she had at first no sense of shame for her ignoble life. She loved to dance and make people happy. She never hurt anyone, and in spite of her shallowness and sinfulness, she is attractive. Popular applause seemed to her to be an expression of affection. Her bitter awakening came at length when she appreciated the contempt with which she was really looked upon.

The band of virile Goths living in luxury and under the allurements of Pelagia and her girls in the enervating atmosphere of an Eastern city shows the polyglot nature of its population and indicates how the hardy warriors of the north lost their stamina through the contagion of immorality. A pagan heaven itself had no attractions beyond those offered by Pelagia and her

maidens, the luxurious feasts these warriors enjoyed, and the wine they drank.

Christianity is represented by a number of different types. Cyril, the Patriarch, is the earnest and sincere ecclesiastic, trying to meet intrigue and force with counter plot and superior force. He had to bear burdens heavy enough to crush a weakling. His purpose was good, but the methods he used were questionable. The dangers he had to encounter sometimes unbalanced his judgment and in his effort to overcome paganism he sowed seeds that at a later date ruined North Africa.

Arsenius, the Monk, is the man of the world who has become weary and disgusted with the plotting and counter plotting of politicians and ecclesiastics. He was once the tutor and adviser of emperors, but now he seeks peace in the quietness of The Laura.

Good Bishop Synesius is the energetic country parson who is too busy meeting daily problems and actual suffering to give time or attention to politics. It has been said that Kingsley's picture of Synesius savors of the English country clergy-

man of his own day, who followed the hounds and loved the trout streams.

Victoria and her father and brother give a picture of the home life of many earnest Christians in the chaotic days of the Fifth Century. Their affection for each other and the care they gave their soldiers and slaves throw an attractive side light upon a dark and gloomy age. The soldier father and the Tribune, his son, have an integrity of character and manly courage that stand out in sharp contrast to the dilettante followers of Hypatia.

The plot of the book is formed by the reaction of two young men to the contending forces and mental stimulants presented by all these various personalities.

Philammon was a monk in The Laura. He was a typical vigorous youth and therefore he was dissatisfied with the quiet atmosphere of the monastery. He wanted to see life and join in the struggle at Alexandria. The old abbot gave Philammon letters to Cyril and sent him forth into the world. Philammon's enthusiasm and confidence were boundless, but they were

based on ignorance. He believed in Christianity with an implicit faith, but his education was limited. To him everything pagan was evil and everything Christian was good. His experiences in the whirlpool of city life carried him off his feet. He received permission from Cyril to attend one of Hypatia's lectures and condemn her. Philammon believed Hypatia to be an immoral woman because she was a pagan philosopher. When he became acquainted with her beauty and purity, her culture and learning, his head was turned.

It is always dangerous to underrate science and philosophy. Ministers and theologians frequently make the mistake of ignoring, denying, or opposing science and philosophy, without appreciating the truths they contain. When a student has been taught by those who directed his education to consider these subjects dangerous to his religious faith he is placed at a hopeless disadvantage. He goes forth trusting in theological doctrines, and when he meets intelligent men equipped with undeniable facts who oppose everything he believes he is overthrown

and sometimes overcome before he has a chance to strike a blow.

So it was with Philammon. He did not give up his faith, but he lost his balance and became a disciple of the pagan philosopher, Hypatia, while he still professed to be a Christian. He was not clear in his own mind as to the truth. He believed in the lessons he had learned at The Laura. He also believed in mathematics and in the reasoning of philosophy. His various moods and beliefs fluctuate through the story and show how deeply his mind was affected. Philammon had to admit that philosophy failed to develop character in its devotees. The disciples of Hypatia proved it. Finally, when he discovered that Pelagia, the courtesan, was his sister, he sought Hypatia's assistance. Hypatia had no help to offer. When Hypatia herself was in need of spiritual help she had to face a blank wall. Her philosophy had reached the end of its power. It could not meet the exigencies of a great crisis. She then turned to mysticism and was played upon by Miriam, the wily sorceress. Philammon was disgusted, and while his affec-

tion for Hypatia remained, his faith in Christianity was reestablished.

The story of Raphael Aben-Ezra shows a different side of the picture. Rich and luxurious, he still had too keen an intellect and too much conscience to be satisfied with a life of ease. He was an ardent admirer of Hypatia. He studied philosophy until he reduced it to finely spun threads. He ended by doubting his ability to know anything; he lost faith in human effort; in a mad moment he laid aside his wealth and became a wandering Cynic. Later he met Victoria and her father. Marjoricus, Victoria's father, had raised a legion to help Count Heraclian become Emperor of Rome. Raphael stumbled on Marjoricus and Victoria in the Campagna after the Count's defeat. The affection of the father and daughter for each other and their care of their wounded soldiers won his respect. At the same time Victoria won his heart. He would not accept Christianity to win Victoria. His conscience forbade any such action. Finally faith came through seeing a power working in these people that was able to create

character and conquer the evils of life. It was not the arguments of good Bishop Synesius or Augustine that developed his faith, it was the daily life of Christians. In one place the young convert besought Marjoricus to be careful how he lived as the life Raphael had seen Marjoricus pursue was the only thing that kept his mind from chaos.

The climax of the story is found when the wild monks of Nitria carry off Hypatia and tear her to pieces.

Kingsley then points out how this brutal deed was condoned by Cyril as a step toward eradicating paganism. This act of Cyril's was one of the steps that finally led to the bitter theological strife of North Africa. When the Christians ceased intriguing against and fighting with pagans they started to fight with Christians who disagreed with them in theology. The Church and the civilization of the country were so weakened by this struggle that there was no strength left to oppose the Mohammedan invasion when it came, and wreck and ruin followed.

Without defining his conviction in words

Kingsley indicates in the experience of Raphael Aben-Ezra the supreme importance of Christianity as a life rather than as a set of theological doctrines and dogmas.

For two thousand years bigotry and the bitterness of theological disputes have weakened the cause of Christ. We proclaim the tolerance and freedom of modern thought, but still the Church is racked by quarreling factions. Fundamentalists distrust and plot against Modernists; and Modernists sneer at and treat with contempt Fundamentalists. Both claim to honor and worship Christ. Cannot these contestants see that the one most injured by their strife is Christ, their common Master?

Hypatia has no loose threads when the book is finished. Each character is followed to the end of his earthly journey. Raphael won Victoria but died in the defense of his country. Philammon returned to The Laura, but to the end of his life he daily prayed for two women, one of whom was a pagan, Hypatia, and the other a courtesan, Pelagia, his sister.

When it was first published *Hypatia* created a great deal of interest and discussion. John G. Whittier wrote to Mrs. Kingsley after the death of her husband :

I forbear to speak of the high estimate which, in common with all English-speaking people, I place upon his literary life-work. My copy of his *Hypatia* is worn by frequent perusal, and the echoes of his rare and beautiful lyrics never die out of my memory.

Chevalier Bunsen wrote to Kingsley when *Hypatia* was first published :

I want just to send you a line to wish you joy for the wonderful picture of the inward and outward life of Hypatia's age, and of the creation of such characters as hers and Raphael's, and the other protagonists.

In view of these commendations it is surprising to know that the professor of Hebrew at Cambridge opposed the University's granting

Kingsley the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law because *Hypatia* was in the professor's opinion an immoral book.

One thing is certain: no thoughtful reader can lay aside *Hypatia* without having deep impressions left by both the characters and plot, and that proves it is a book with a message.

CHAPTER IX

THE SPIRITUAL MESSAGE OF THOMAS CARLYLE

CARLYLE was not merely a solitary dyspeptic brooding over his aches and pains with his pipe and shag tobacco as his only companions; he was a prophet burdened with a sense of man's limitations. It is a mistake to consider his bitter denunciations of society as the diatribes of a dyspeptic. He had eyes that saw below the surface of things, and his heart was troubled by the superficiality of the mass of men who mistake rouge and powder for a good complexion and a fair skin.

The early days of Carlyle's married life at Craigenputtock and the rustic atmosphere of the farm are a fitting background for his character. The severe winters and rigorous environment, the lonely moor and late spring—all influenced his view of life. When he came to London he car-

ried with him the breath of the moor, and he knew the difference between realities and shams.

Carlyle's married life was not an ideal one. One cannot fail to recognize from the letters these two delightful personalities left behind them the depth of their mutual affection, but their home was unfortunate in housing two geniuses. Any household that possesses one genius is under a severe strain. A genius is a person to be admired, and everyone likes to read about one, but no one wants to live with one. They are too irascible and impatient with little things. I believe Carlyle appreciated the difficulties his wife had to contend with and confessed it when, in speaking of Dante, he said, "I fancy the rigorous, earnest man with his keen excitements was not altogether easy to make happy."

Carlyle's philosophy is found in *Sartor Resartus*, *Past and Present*, and *Heroes and Hero Worship*. *Sartor Resartus* and *Past and Present* are hard reading. There is an extravagance of expression, a surging of words and welling up of thought within their pages which requires constant concentration of the mind if

one is to appreciate the author's meaning. The average person will find *Heroes and Hero Worship* more enjoyable, but even these lectures are filled with solid material, and constant care is required to understand the author's thoughts.

It is easy to see and to say that Carlyle was an admirer of great men. It is not so easy to understand why he chose certain characters as examples of greatness and ignored other individuals as unworthy of this distinction. His essay on Burns is a good illustration of this. No loving mother could more clearly see her son's faults or cover them up more tenderly than Carlyle does. He shows his appreciation by saying, "They are something too, those humble genuine lark-notes of a Burns,—skylark, starting from the humble furrow, far overhead into the blue depths, and singing to us so genuinely there!" Robert Louis Stevenson complains that Carlyle's essay on Burns shows only his "head of gold," and that he would deal with his "feet of clay." Admitting Carlyle's kindness in describing only the good qualities of the poet, the question immediately arises, how could the de-

nouncer of all shams classify Burns, with his "feet of clay," as a hero?

A positive personality is only possessed by an individual who touches the deeper meaning of existence. A shallow nature flutters about life like a butterfly in a garden. Those who have such natures do not know where they are going, and they never follow a direct course. They spend their time and strength in fluttering. A strong personality knows there is a meaning in life and in spite of human weakness is trying to follow a course or show others the sacredness of commonplace things. That is what Carlyle means when he gives us a picture of Robert Burns's "head of gold." The poet was not merely a sensualist and dilettante, he bitterly regretted his weakness and his sin. It is possible that his marriage to Jean Armour when he did not love her was an expression of his manhood in an effort to make amends for an irremediable wrong. Burns saw below the surface of things and expressed the meaning of life in his poetry and songs. Whereas a mere libertine is only worthy of condemnation, a stumbling poet who

has been overcome by the element of his character that makes him a poet is to be pitied. He saw the vision and expressed it in words, but the frailty of human nature hampered his steps and blocked his path. It is better to have seen the vision and to have failed to live up to its requirements rather than to be ignorant of the vision's existence.

Carlyle's purpose was to show that life without a spiritual appreciation or vision was only an animal existence. Antæus, the giant, had his strength renewed every time he touched the earth. Earthworms live in the earth without strength, but the giant is reborn every time he touches it. So it is in life. Some men exist as worms, but the hero is recreated by constant contact with eternal reality.

Carlyle was a prophet of personality. He knew the importance of character and tried to show men that this was the only thing that really counted. Modern civilization with its complicated organization tends to suppress personality. The individual is caught in the whirl of social life, the machinery of business, and the political

organization of democracy. There is little opportunity for anyone to express his individuality. At an earlier date, when existence was less complex, personality played a more important part in life. Society was less arbitrary in its demands. Business gave more opportunity for a display of new ideas. Everyone could express himself in the town meeting. It is easy to see the part each wheel plays in a simple machine. If for the moment we think of a wagon as a machine, we perceive at once the need of four wheels and the importance of each one functioning properly. The power is generated by the horses, and we know that the horses and wheels must coördinate in their functions if any progress is to be made. We increase our rate of progress and radius of travel a hundredfold by using automobiles, but now we have to deal with a complicated engine. It is not only necessary to have gas, oil, and water to make the machine go, but every part must be coördinated with other parts or discord ensues and progress ends.

So it is in society. Personality is still the es-

stantial thing, but its importance is overshadowed by the complexity of civilization.

Carlyle saw that men were prone to depend on substitutes instead of on realities. *Sartor Resartus*, a philosophy of clothes, is a protest against this weakness. The House of Lords has dignity only because of its broadcloth garments. This is shown when Carlyle asks, "Lives the man that can figure a naked Duke of Windlestraw addressing a naked House of Lords?" The sarcasm of this question makes the reader realize how much the human estimate of men depends upon what they wear. Carlyle drives his point home by saying that a man without his clothes is only a "Forked Radish with a head fantastically carved." These epigrammatic sayings make the reader appreciate that the most important thing in life is not the clothes men wear, but the personality that dwells in the naked soul. If people could only realize that clothes are only "the dead fleeces of sheep, the bark of vegetables, the entrails of worms, the hides of oxen and seals, the felt of furred beasts," they would not be so enamored of them. When the

individual walks on the street decked in his Sunday best he is only a "ragscreen, overheaped with shreds and tatters racked from the Charnel-house of Nature." These things on which mankind spends so much time and thought are slowly rotting while they are being worn. They are not the real things of life. They are only shams and appearances.

Another substitute for personality that Carlyle condemns is man's effort to gain money. He condemns the Englishmen of his own day as being afraid of only one hell. The hell they dread is the danger of failing to make money. Useful and important as money is, it is no substitute for personality. The great men of the world have seldom been rich. They have had something more important than gold and silver. They have had ideas and ideals. They have impressed themselves on the thought life of the world. By their efforts human weakness has been overcome and society has been built up. Men who share in this task are the heroes of the world. They are the poets and prophets, the artists and authors, the kings and priests.

Heroes and Hero Worship shows the place these men have played in creating civilization. The list of characters he considers in this essay is a most surprising one. It includes Mohammed, Luther, John Knox, Robert Burns, William Shakespeare, Samuel Johnson, Cromwell, and Odin. At first sight there seems to be no unifying principle binding this group together. To Carlyle they were all great men because they had great personalities and were in touch with the spiritual reality that underlies all existence. They were not mere "forked straddling animals with bandy legs," but they were "spirits—the unutterable Mystery of Mysteries." *Heroes and Hero Worship* supplements and develops Carlyle's philosophy as he outlines it in *Sartor Resartus*. Having stripped man of all appearances and shams he shows what personality has done in different ages and in different places. He takes Cromwell as a farmer who feared God and Him alone, and shows how the character that was developed in the humble walks of an agricultural life was able when the opportunity came to grapple with the questions of an em-

pire. In *Past and Present* he tells how St. Edmundsbury Monastery was in chaos until Samson was elected Abbot. It was the personality and character of Samson that established order and prosperity. It is the man and not clothes or money that solves every social problem.

Carlyle had little sympathy with democracy as a goal for human effort. The stump speaker and political demagogue will find no material in his writings to help them in their efforts at spellbinding. Democracy is only a means to an end and not anything to be glorified as a product of human genius. The real aim of society should be to get men with the right character into places of authority. These men are what Carlyle calls "Kingly Men" or "the men who can." The universal ballot only makes the voter "one-twenty thousandth part of a talker in the national palaver" and this fraction is too small to mean much.

These illustrations indicate the important part personality plays, according to Carlyle, in the life of mankind. Besides showing the importance of personality, Carlyle, in *Sartor Resartus*,

points out how it may be gained. He does this in the chapters on "The Eternal Nay" and "The Everlasting Yea." "The Eternal Nay" is the awakening of an individual to his spiritual significance in the world. The individual is not a mere atom, tossed about by every wind that blows and crushed by antagonistic forces. He is not merely a clothes rack or a gold digger. The individual is a soul. He has behind him the spiritual forces that maintain the universe. He is a child of God. When life taunts him with his impotence he can rise up and hurl back his defiance. This realization flows through his veins like living fire. Carlyle calls this the "spiritual new birth, or Baphometric Fire baptism." When this takes place a hero is born.

"The Everlasting Yea" is the positive result that takes place in character after a man has found his soul. He discovers that the conditions of his life furnish the material out of which his ideals must be turned into accomplishments. His convictions must convert themselves into conduct. He must have done with shams and appearances and become one with the spiritual

element of life. It does not matter what he does as long as he does it in the right way. He must accept the first duty that arises—by fulfilling this duty the second one becomes clearer.

Personality is a hard thing to define. Carlyle makes clear the part it plays in the world, but he does not give a definition of it. While we admit this difficulty everyone realizes what is meant by personality. Take for example two young women: one has regular features, a good complexion, and an exquisite figure. According to all the requirements of æsthetics she is beautiful. The other lacks regular features and other elements of beauty, but she is dynamic with personality. We say of the first "she is beautiful but dumb"; the second and less attractive, by any description that can be given, is the one who wins affection, influences others, and plays a larger part in life. This power of attraction does not depend on social position, beautiful clothes, or expensive jewelry. It is a mysterious element of the person's individuality.

The radio suggests an illustration of what Carlyle means by personality. An individual

can live with a radio in his home and never turn it on. Such a person has no conception of the music and lectures, football games and prize fights that might echo through his house. These things are non-existent to this individual because they are not used. Another man may turn on the radio but through carelessness only receive a confused discord from two or more stations. The hero is the man who tunes his radio to the spiritual undercurrent of life. He hears the stars singing praise to the Great Creator; every flower and budding shrub is vocal with meaning; the branches of the trees and the grass of the meadows are vibrant with praise; the sunrise and sunset as they paint the glowing skies emphasize this truth. Men to be heroes must appreciate the deeper meaning of life.

Religion is man's contact with this spiritual undercurrent. It is not merely a system of doctrine or a set of dogmas. It is a reaching out for the spiritual realities that underlie the world. In this sense religion is the creator of great personalities and strong characters. Even religious men sometimes have deplorable weaknesses, but they

cannot be religious and still be flutterers. They see a goal ahead of them, and they are blazing a path through swamps and over hills toward the golden glow of a rising sun. Darkness does not dampen their efforts, and difficulties do not stay their progress. The light is ahead, and in spite of stumbling and sometimes falling, they are forging their way toward the coming day. It is only the bigot or the man of small intelligence who believes his path is the only way to the light. The heroes of Carlyle were all men who had seen the gleam over distant mountain tops and were seeking it in their own way. The important thing is to catch a glimpse of the gleam and to take it as a goal.

When Carlyle refers to Christ he always does it with a reverent mind and a tender word. In Judea many centuries ago the Man of Galilee lived and pointed men to the realities of existence and the truth of God. He was in touch with the underlying meaning of life. He saw the light in the eastern sky and understood its purpose. He did not teach a theology or establish ecclesiastical dogmas. He lived with God

and taught men the secret of life. Pharisees and Sadducees trained in the law and steeped in ritual under His tutelage discovered that religion had a new significance. Publicans and sinners, harlots and thieves learned that sensuality gave no lasting satisfaction. This sort of people has furnished much of the material out of which the Carpenter of Nazareth has built His Church. These ecclesiastically distorted or morally bedraggled individuals developed personality—the mysterious charm that wins human affection and begets a loyalty that halts not at death. The rich and the poor, the intellectual and the ignorant, have found that life is more than living and God is more than a name.

Carlyle tried to show the world that religion was more than cant or cathedrals; more than theology or dogma; and more than creed or catechism. Religion is life and Christ is the giver of life. Carlyle was not only a prophet of personality, but also a seer who widened the scope of religion and showed its universal meaning.

CHAPTER X

JOSEPH MAZZINI "ON THE DUTIES OF MAN"

IDEAS are a strange kind of seed to sow, as no one can be sure what their harvest will be. When a farmer sows beans he reaps beans, and corn always produces corn; but ideas are different. Some genius thinks a great thought, sees a new significance in everyday life, or appreciates a deeper meaning in human relations. He gives expression to his idea and sows it in the mind of other men, but no one knows what the results will be.

One day Christ was asked, "Who is my neighbor?" In answering this question He told the parable of the Good Samaritan. In this answer Christ showed that every man had a duty to those who were afflicted and distressed. He gave a concrete expression to the principles involved in the Golden Rule. The idea thus expressed has become the foundation stone of all efforts

to ameliorate the conditions of workers, to improve the homes of tenement dwellers; to carry on the work of the Red Cross; every free clinic, dispensary, and hospital in the world has received an impetus from these words. No one who heard this idea when it was first uttered knew how much it would affect civilization or how far it would mold human character. It laid down the principle that man's responsibility was not limited by nation, race, or creed. It opened the door to a true brotherhood of men, and no one can yet tell how far it will go in solving the problems of humanity.

Joseph Mazzini was an idealist and philosopher, and he planted ideas in the minds of men as a farmer does seed in a field. His object was to unite and free Italy and make his country into a democracy. He freely gave his talents and often risked his life to attain this goal. He was the prophet and teacher who prepared the minds of the Italian people for the work of Cavour, the politician, and Garibaldi, the soldier. While this was unquestionably the main purpose of Mazzini's life and work, his love for humanity

led him to assist in every effort to improve the conditions of the oppressed and inspire in other nations a love of freedom based on religious principles. His influence has reached far beyond his native land and created agencies for human betterment that he never dreamed of.

In his youth Mazzini joined the Carbonari, a secret society, which was struggling to unite and free Italy. He quickly became discouraged by the inefficiency of the Carbonari and organized a society of his own which he called "Young Italy." His purpose was to free the effort for democracy from the control of easy-going middle-aged men and place it in the hands of aggressive and youthful enthusiasts. His activities were discovered by the police, and Mazzini was driven into exile, first in Marseilles and then in Switzerland. The story of his life in exile is as interesting as one of Dumas's novels. He lived in deserted houses and never appeared on the streets except after dark and in disguise; he met and loved several fine women, but was as pure in his life and as loyal to his purpose as an anchorite.

While an exile he fell in love with Giudetta Sidoli. They became engaged but were never able to marry, because the uncertainties of his life prohibited it. Giudetta sympathized with Mazzini's enthusiasm for democracy and at the risk of being imprisoned undertook a political mission to Florence at his request. Time mellowed their affection, and up to the time of her death they remained warm and sympathetic friends.

His attachment for Madeleine de Mandrot was different. This was a case of a woman's pity and a disciple's adoration changing into a passionate love. Mazzini was lonely, and he might have accepted the advice of his friends and married Madeleine but for his belief that he was still bound by his troth to Giudetta.

During his days in exile in Switzerland he found time to organize a society of "Young Switzerland," which was to work on the same lines and for the same object in that country as "Young Italy" was in Italy. He even tried to organize a group of seventeen political refugees in Switzerland into a "Society of Young Europe" for the purpose of establishing democ-

racies in all the European nations. It is interesting to know in this connection that the Swiss constitution in 1848 had as one of its two draftsmen a friend and disciple of Mazzini, and that it embodied the essentials of his ideals.

At a later date he lived in England and suffered abject poverty; he knew the bitterness of loneliness, but enjoyed the friendship of Thomas Carlyle and his wife, of Joseph Toynbee, of Margaret Fuller, and of George Sand, and he corresponded with Lamennais. He wrote essays, taught Italian organ boys in London, and finally was one of the Triumvirate, and little less than a dictator, of the short-lived Roman Republic of 1848-1849.

The message of this Nineteenth-Century prophet was both religious and political. It is impossible to separate his religious faith from his political beliefs, as they are woven into an indivisible unit. His essays, "On the Duties of Man," "Faith and Future," and "From the Pope to the Council" give a good digest of his political and religious ideals.

While he was a social philosopher he was not

a socialist. He believed in an ideal democracy. This democracy must be based on the duties and not on the rights of man, as the doctrine of the rights of man was too weak in constructive elements to establish and maintain a true democracy. In order to create a democracy he said:

It is necessary to convince men that they are all sons of one sole God, and bound to fulfill and execute one sole law here on earth; that each of them is bound to live, not for himself, but for others; that the aim of existence is not to be more or less happy, but to make ourselves and others more virtuous. . . .

Religion has created for man that theory of *duty* which is the parent of sacrifice; which has inspired, and ever will inspire, him to high and holy things; the sublime theory which brings man nearer to God, lends to the human creature a spark of omnipotence, overleaps every obstacle, and converts the scaffold of the martyr into a ladder to triumph. . . .

Right is the faith of the individual. Duty is the common collective faith. Right can but organize resistance; it may destroy, it cannot found. Duty builds up, associates, and unites; it is derived from a general law, whereas Right is derived only from human will.

Mazzini's conception of democracy contradicts the widespread propaganda for "personal liberty" that is one of the outstanding characteristics of the political life in the United States at the present time. Mazzini was not interested in prohibition, and the opposition to prohibition in America is significant only as an indication of the mental attitude of some citizens and politicians. Democracy as a form of government is of too much importance for human welfare to be jeopardized by any such issue.

Instead of emphasizing the privileges and freedom of the citizens in a democracy, Mazzini taught that the only way man's rights could be conserved was by teaching the people to observe their duties to God, to the law, which is "the

cry of your own conscience ratified by the consent of humanity," to humanity, their country, their families and themselves. The performance of these duties is the supreme function of religion because "The Republican party is not a political party; it is essentially a religious party."

No one has ever realized more fully than Mazzini did the sacredness of everyday life. Every task had a divine significance, and there was no distinction between a sacred and a secular calling.

Tell us not that the earth is of clay. The earth is of God. God created it as the medium through which we may ascend to Him. The earth is not a mere sojourn of temptation or expiation; it is the appointed dwelling place wherein we are bound to work out our own improvement and development and advance toward a higher stage of existence. God created us not to contemplate, but to act. He created us in His own image, and He is "Thought" and "Action," or

rather in Him there is no Thought which is not simultaneous Action.

The method by which democracy attains its goal is association, which is "the fraternal co-operation toward a common end" and "is as sacred as religion itself, which is the association of souls." Association must not violate morality or the ideals of the social conscience. It must be peaceful and open to all. Association requires a people to be educated. Mazzini draws a sharp distinction between education and instruction and says, "Education addresses itself to the moral faculties; instruction to the intellectual."

I have already spoken of Mazzini's influence in Italy and Switzerland, but his ideas have reached beyond those countries. He has directly influenced the social thought and activities of England and America far more than is generally known.

While an exile in England he became interested in the Italian organ boys. They were ignorant and often suffered abuse at the hands of their masters. Mazzini organized a night school

for these unfortunate boys. Joseph Toynbee, the aurist, was associated with him in this work. Arnold Toynbee, the son of Joseph Toynbee, was a lad at the time. Is it not possible that Arnold Toynbee, the so-called Father of the Social Settlement movement, first received his inspiration for this work from Mazzini? Once, years ago, I read a quotation from Arnold Toynbee's writings in which he quoted Mazzini. This shows Toynbee was familiar with Mazzini's writings. It made a deep impression on my mind when I first discovered it. I visited the library at Columbia University in an effort to check it up, but I failed to find it. It is at any rate true that Mazzini's ideas of religion and service are the best statement of the fundamental ideals of the social settlement movement in its early stages that can be found anywhere.

A scene took place in Mazzini's latter days that is prophetic of the future. He had gone to Geneva to visit his mother's grave, and he says:

The only thing really touching to me, was in the churchyard—it was late—and the

place was empty, but a keeper had, it seems, recognized me, and coming out of the gate, some poor people, a priest among them, were drawn up in line, bowing and almost touching the earth. Not a smile, no attempt at absurd applause, they felt my sadness, and contrived to show they were sharing it.

His biographer pointedly asks, "Will not some Italian artist paint the scene?" The prophet of a free and democratic Italy, with a broken heart and body, welcomed by the common people!

Mazzini's star has not set. It has only begun to show its light. Modern democracies and the social settlement movement continue to perpetuate his ideals.

One of the most important contributions Mazzini made to the thought life of the world was his conception of Christianity. He was not a Catholic, as no loyal member of that church would say, "Papacy is extinct, a worn-out form, preserved yet a little while for the veneration of the lovers of antiquity"; and in another place,

"Catholicism is dead." He never professed to be a Protestant and we can hardly class him as such when we read :

Protestantism of to-day denies human unity, the link between earth and heaven. It pretends to emancipate thought, while leaving action submissive and enslaved. It would join conscience and servitude, slavery and liberty. No possible success can await on its propaganda.

From these quotations it is evidently hard to classify this prophet of religious democracy. He was unquestionably a Christian, as he says :

Christ expired. All he had asked of mankind wherewith to save them—says Lamennais—was a cross whereon to die. But ere he died he had announced the glad tidings to the people. To those who asked of him from whence he had received it, he answered, "From God, the Father." From the height of his cross he had invoked him twice. Therefore upon the cross did his victory begin and still does it endure.

Mazzini's Christianity is a faith freed from dogma and theology. It is a religion of life, loyalty, and service. His writings are filled with spiritual aspiration and show a full recognition of God's place in the world. No one can foresee just what effect this conception of religion may have on future generations. Mazzini's interpretation of Christianity may help many people to appreciate the importance of a religious faith that will lead them to accept Christ as a saviour while they leave to one side dogmas and doctrines with which they are out of sympathy.

Mazzini's idea of religion as the inspiration and foundation of democracy may help these people to coördinate their lives on a spiritual basis. This conception of religion makes it the vital animating principle that underlies all social progress.

His belief that true liberty depends on every citizen fulfilling his duties to God and man is most significant. This conception of democracy emphasizes the elements of human life and conduct that are often ignored by politicians and demagogues.

Mazzini had the political acumen to differentiate the essentials of freedom from its superficial manifestations. In this day of socialistic propaganda, communistic tendencies and Bolshevik power, his words deserve serious consideration.

It is an open question whether or not democracy will be able to survive the conflict that is now taking place in the political life of the world. I believe Mazzini has pointed out the principles that, if they were only appreciated by statesmen and accepted by the citizens of all democratic countries, would perpetuate the things that make for liberty and freedom and save the world from political upheavals, which bring suffering on the innocent as well as the guilty.

CHAPTER XI

TOLSTOI'S CONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY

TOLSTOI'S vivid personality shines through his books like the sun through a stained-glass window. His novels and religious writings reveal many different colors, but the reader is always conscious of the author's character. Tolstoi is so dynamic that his personality dominates everything he touches.

My Confession furnishes a good introduction to Tolstoi's religious belief. This book was written in his maturity, and it is the story of his own life. He says:

I put men to death in war, I fought duels to slay others, I lost at cards, wasted my substance wrung from the sweat of peasants, punished the latter cruelly, rioted with loose women, and deceived men . . . and yet I was not the less considered by my equals a comparatively moral man.

One of Tolstoi's aunts, who, he assures the reader, was really a good woman, earnestly desired him to have an intrigue with a married woman. Is it possible that he answered his aunt's wish by writing *Anna Karénina* to show how such affairs ruin all the individuals involved? Be that as it may, Tolstoi finally understood that his money and friends, reputation and literary attainments, all failed to give any meaning to existence. Suicide seemed to be the only logical solution of his dilemma.

Tolstoi felt he was in the same position as the traveler in a parable he quotes. This mythical personage, while traveling on the steppes, was chased by wild beasts and sought refuge in an empty well. As he started to climb down the well, he discovered a dragon at its bottom. He clung for safety to a branch that grew from the side. A black and a white mouse, day and night, started to gnaw through the branch. He could not climb out of the well, and he could not drop into it, and he could not stay where he was. Tolstoi held that this parable illustrated not only his condition but also that of every human

being. The dragon of death is just below men, and still they try to lick the drops of honey off the leaves in reach of their tongue!

Tolstoi was finally convinced that neither science nor philosophy could solve his problem. He then turned to religion. He was led to believe that—

Faith springs, like man and his reason, from the mysterious first cause. That first cause is God, the cause of the body and mind of man. . . . All that men sincerely believe in must be true; it may be differently expressed, but it cannot be a lie, and consequently, if it seems to me a lie, that must be because I do not understand it.

This kind of reasoning convinced him it was only through faith that life acquires any meaning. He tried to go back to the orthodox Greek Church, but was repelled by its dogmas and ritual. His religious belief was determined to a large extent by the environment in which he lived. Therefore, it is important to understand his surroundings. *Anna Karénina* and *Resurrec-*

tion give an excellent picture of this background.

Anna Karénina is composed of two distinct and separate plots dealing with different groups of people, woven together in a remarkable and artistic manner. The book is like a master-piece of music composed of two distinct and different motifs. The beauty of each motif is increased by the harmonies of the other. The themes that are woven together in *Anna Karénina* are the deterioration and ruin of Anna's character due to her social life and sin, and the purification and religious growth of Levin in a rural atmosphere. Anna Karénina is the heroine of one plot, while Levin is the hero of the other.

Anna was a beautiful society woman who was unable to overcome temptation when it suddenly overtook her. Her loyalty to her husband and her affection for her son could not overcome her interest in Vronsky. She knew she was doing wrong, but her pleasure in Vronsky's company and the emotional thrills his attentions caused were too enjoyable to be given up. She yielded to his advances in spite of the warnings of her conscience and the mental distress that ensued.

Both her raptures and her regrets are emphasized. Anna recognized the magnanimity of her husband, but she could not remain loyal to him. Her husband, Karénin, in spite of his kindness, is an unattractive personality. Even his magnanimity in offering to protect her good name by retaining her as his wife and accepting her illegitimate child as his is depicted in such a way as to weaken the reader's sympathy for him. Tolstoi shows how Anna's nervous system gradually gave way and how her unhappiness grew until it overshadowed the early rapture of her illicit love. Society raised its barriers against her because she had broken the rules of the game. She was shut out of the social life and entertainments that had always been her daily portion. The lovers lived abroad for a while, but they soon wearied of that unnatural kind of existence. They then settled on Vronsky's country estate, but the routine there became tiresome. Anna's spirits and mind showed the strain of the unwholesome situation in which she lived. Karénin would not give up his son, and Anna could not bear to lose the child, who shared her

affections with her lover, Vronsky. At first Anna was indifferent to a divorce and refused to accept Karénin's offer to freedom. Finally, when she wanted a divorce so as to marry Vronsky and become respectable, Karénin refused to grant her request. Anna's life was filled with an increasing restlessness of mind and soul. There was and there could be no real happiness in her life. She became jealous and suspicious of everything Vronsky did. At the end of the story, in order to hurt Vronsky, Anna takes her own life.

The second story is about Levin, the landowner, and Kitty Shcherbatsky. Levin was a typical landowner who tried to improve and develop his estates. Many elements in his character and work were drawn from Tolstoi's own experience. He was handicapped by the stupidity and stubbornness of the peasants. Although Tolstoi ruthlessly pictures the weaknesses of the peasants, he also shows their good qualities. A delightful picture is given of Levin taking a scythe and working in the field with his men. You can feel the thrill of the scythe cutting through the lush grass, and the exhilaration of

daily toil. No one could have described the experience so vividly unless he had enjoyed the manual labor. Levin's wooing of Kitty is told in a kindly humorous way that preserves the reader's respect for both of these delightful personalities, but also emphasizes the foibles and weaknesses of human nature.

The awakening of Levin's faith suggests the spiritual experience of Tolstoi. Levin claimed to be a free thinker. In times of personal need he found it natural and not hypocritical to pray. He tried to solve his doubts by reading and study. He discovered that life contained elements beyond the reach of logic and philosophy. He began to appreciate the spiritual aspirations of his soul. Levin's quiet home life in the country, with Kitty and their baby, is a contrast to the bitterness, strife, and jealousy of the lives of Anna and Vronsky. At the end of the book Levin finds God, but it is not in the ritual of the Greek Church. He finds God in his own soul.

Resurrection goes much further than *Anna Karénina* in outlining Tolstoi's religious faith.

Resurrection is the story of Prince Nekhlúdor's sin and the suffering it caused. It opens with the prostitute, Katúsha Maslova, being placed on trial for the murder of one of her admirers. The Prince was on the jury. He had to sit in judgment on the woman whom, ten years before, when she was an attractive and innocent girl, he had seduced. In those days he had been fond of the pretty maid in his aunt's home. He had tried to forget the ignoble part he had played in seducing her. At the trial he discovered the extent of her degradation. He realized that she was a victim of his sin and that he was responsible for her evil life. Through a technical mistake the verdict of the jury condemned her to hard labor in Siberia instead of exonerating her as Nekhlúdor intended. The Prince believed it was his duty, because of having seduced her, to save her from imprisonment and also from her evil life. He even went so far as to suggest marriage. His efforts to ameliorate her sentence showed him the weaknesses of the courts and convinced him that the laws were not created to establish justice but rather to protect the inter-

ests of the rich. All his efforts in her behalf were blocked, either by technicalities or by the selfishness and indifference of officials. His desire to atone in some measure to Katusha for the wrong he had done her led him into the prison, where he saw the sufferings and humiliation of the prisoners. He found innocent men and women in jail, who were kept there because no one was disinterested enough to see that their case was brought before the court for action. He even found men in prison for reading the Gospels and trying to teach others about Christ. Nekhlúdob was much impressed by the unselfishness and earnestness of the political prisoners.

In contrast to these idealistic prisoners Tolstoi draws with vigorous strokes of his pen a picture of the selfish and inconsequential lives of the rich and aristocratic society people. He also depicts the tawdriness and insufficiency of a ritualistic religion. A service in the prison chapel is told about in such a way as to stir the reader's indignation at this mockery of Christ's message and purpose.

At last, after all the Prince's efforts to free Katusha had failed, except his petition to the Czar, which was still in abeyance, Katusha was sent to Siberia. Nekhlúdog took the journey with her. This trip showed him the brutality and vulgarity of both the officers and soldiers who were in charge of the prisoners. Tolstoi emphasizes the sufferings of the exiles on the journey, and also shows the kindness and sympathy of these sufferers for one another.

The story ends by Katusha receiving a commutation of her sentence from hard labor and being exiled to some less remote section of Siberia. Nekhlúdog reaffirmed his desire to marry her, but Katusha told him she had decided to marry Simonson, one of her fellow prisoners, who needed her. The Prince knew that Katusha refused to marry him because she knew such a marriage would injure his social position. Nekhlúdog recognized her renunciation by calling her, much to her surprise, a "good woman."

Anna Karénina and *Resurrection* show why

Tolstoi was so bitter in his denunciation of the rich and prosperous society people. Their manner of life developed their sensual natures and destroyed their morals. Luxury and wealth, the courts and army are all described so as to stir up the reader's antagonism. The sexual sins of aristocratic men as illustrated in both Vronsky's intrigue with Anna and Nekhlúdob's seduction of Katusha indicate the demoralized condition of the society in which Tolstoi lived. In both cases these men entered into their amours with the feeling that other men would approve of their actions.

In the closing pages of *Resurrection* Tolstoi describes how Nekhlúdob, in the light of his recent experiences, read the Gospels anew. In the Sermon on the Mount he found Five Commandments:

First Commandment (Matt. 5:21—26).

This one says that a man must not only commit no murder, but he must not even be angry with his brother, or call him a fool, "Raca," and if he should quarrel with anyone, he must be reconciled with him before

he offers his gift to God—that is, before praying.

Second Commandment (Matt. 5:27—32). This is that a man must not only abstain from committing adultery but must even avoid enjoying the beauty of a woman, but if he has ever been united to her, he must never be unfaithful to her.

Third Commandment (Matt. 5:33—37). That no man must seal a promise with an oath.

Fourth Commandment (Matt. 5:38—42). That man must not only refrain from returning evil for evil; but when he is struck on one cheek he must turn the other; that he must forgive injuries and endure them with humility and never refuse to serve his fellow men.

Fifth Commandment (Matt. 5:43—48). That a man must not only refrain from hating or fighting his enemies, but that he must love, help and serve them.

With this idea of the Gospels “a new life did begin for Nekhlúdof, not because he entered

new conditions, but because all the happenings of his daily life assumed a different aspect and a new significance."

This is a fitting conclusion for the novel, and it furnishes us with a clear-cut outline of Tolstoi's religious beliefs, for these Commandments are to him the heart of the Gospel. His religion might be called the "Law of the Five Commandments."

In *My Religion* Tolstoi considers at length the importance of these Commandments, and shows how, difficult as it is to obey them, they offer the only hope that humanity can find anywhere of making life worth living.

Tolstoi believed that hatred, lust, war, and the loss of a personal sense of responsibility are the things that make life miserable. He claims that existence, without religion, is so filled with unhappiness a wise man has no choice but to accept some system of thought that offers to alleviate this condition. The Commandments of Christ point out the way of escape.

Important as the churches have been in the past, they have long since outgrown their use-

fulness. Instead of leading men to Christ, they lead men to dogmas and sacraments. What the world needs to-day is a return to Christ and an appreciation of His teachings.

Tolstoi recognized and opposed the evil of war. He believed that wars were caused by man's opposition to evil. If men could only learn Christ's way of meekness wars would cease. The oath of fealty to a government and man's antagonism to people of another race accentuate and develop a warlike spirit. If men limited their nay to nay and their yea to yea, they would always feel such a personal sense of responsibility for their acts they would not dare to take a human life. If Christians could only be taught to appreciate that all races and nations are also children of their Heavenly Father, they would learn to love them, and when love prevails wars cease.

Instead of living an unwholesome and unnatural life in cities where balls and dinners, feasts and gambling, operas and theaters accentuate the sensual life, they would live in the country and enjoy physical labor in the fields,

and then the dangerous sex question would be reduced to a minimum. The belief that some individuals have a birthright to luxury and a life of indulgence is all wrong. No man has a right to anything but the product of his own labor.

If it were a question of satisfactory existence under present conditions in society and the difficulty of obeying Christ's law, there might be room for argument. But in Tolstoi's judgment, life as it is now lived is so unsatisfactory that men ought to be willing to accept any system of religion which promises to ameliorate the conditions of existence.

Tolstoi's religion was based on his own experiences in society, in the army, and on his country estate. It is not the religious belief of a man who theorizes on life, but rather the mature judgment of one who has delved deeply into all sorts of activities.

Tolstoi dealt at first hand with the problem of poverty in a great city by acting as a census official in the slums of Moscow. He tells of this experience in *What Is to Be Done?* The

poverty, filth and depravity he found there are almost unbelievable. He holds that the organization of a society that produces such conditions must be wrong. He tried to help these sufferers by gifts of money, but soon learned that his gifts accomplished nothing. He found it was difficult to discover cases where money was really helpful. He tried to organize a society among his rich and cultured friends through which money might be raised and personal service given to ameliorate the poverty and misery of some of these sufferers. He failed to get any coöperation.

His study of this subject led him to the following conclusions:

First: The rich must stop deceiving themselves. They are not peculiar beings endowed with great privileges by God. In fact, they have no excuse for their useless lives of luxury.

Second: The privileged classes must renounce their luxuries, privileges, and uselessness.

Third: Every man must fulfill the eternal law of labor. He must work for the necessities of life and not employ a crowd of people to produce luxuries while there are not enough

necessities produced to give all men a comfortable living.

Tolstoi claims that religion, philosophy, and science are all used to defend the established order and the selfishness of the senseless rich. He is bitter in his denunciation of the use of force. He claims that the only property anyone really possesses or has a right to is his own body and its ability to produce.

You cannot read *What Is to Be Done?* without recognizing both Tolstoi's earnestness and the strength of his ruthless condemnation of luxury.

Tolstoi's conception of Christianity is a stimulating and impressive effort on the part of one of the outstanding personalities of the Nineteenth Century to make religion a vital element in man's daily life.

Tolstoi was not interested in immortality. In his judgment the churches have placed too much emphasis on the future life and neglected the practical problems of daily existence. He claims that men have a life to live on this earth, and that they are making a miserable failure of it.

The things men strive for are all chimeras and Dead Sea apples, which give no permanent satisfaction to those who are fortunate enough to attain them. Christ came to teach mankind how to live a successful and happy life. People say Christ's teachings are impracticable. The words of Christ only appear to be impracticable because men have never seriously tried to obey them. N. H. Dole, in his life of Tolstoi, says:

As for immortality, it is plain that he at one time disbelieved in a personal life after death; but as he grew older he came to the conclusion that it was inconceivable that he should be a part of the infinite in this life and not continue to exist after bodily death.

Tolstoi's effort to make Christ the center of all human activity and the controlling power of society is most stimulating. Many people who are out of sympathy with dogma and sacraments, theology and churches will find here an effort to make Christianity a practical rule of everyday life. Tolstoi clarifies the idea of religion, in a remarkable manner, for hard-headed and prac-

tical people. He outlines simple rules which are hard to practise but easy to understand. Tolstoi's conception of Christianity takes religion out of the realm of dialectics and makes it a practical science of daily living. Whether you agree with Tolstoi or not, you cannot read his writings without recognizing that you are studying the work of a true Christian and one who makes religion a vital element in life.

CHAPTER XII

THE CONTAGION OF CHRIST

“QUO VADIS?” BY SIENKIEWICZ

EVERY period of history has its own definite character.

Each age differs from other ages as much as individuals do. Some men are placid, others are irascible; some people are scientific, others are artistic; some are religious, others are sceptical. There are just as clearly marked divergences of character in society.

The Victorian period means one thing, while the Renaissance means another; the age of Pericles was in no way similar to the age of Cromwell.

Besides the dominating interest of an age, which establishes its character, there are always other interests supported by recalcitrant minorities, acting beneath the surface. These obscure

groups frequently develop a social power that determines the course of future civilization.

The great historical novel is one that shows both the dominant characteristics of a period, and also the significance of some of the less apparent but none-the-less vital social forces that are preparing the way for a new age.

Quo Vadis? is a great book because it not only pictures the scepticism, immorality, and licentiousness of Nero's court, but also reveals the purity and strength of the early Christians. This book has a vital message for modern times. We also are living in an age that appears to be sceptical and immoral, but under the surface there is a spiritual awakening taking place. With a recurrence of pagan morality and philosophy there is also an awakening of a spiritual religion. Religious formulas and dogmas are dead. They are as dead as the Roman religion was in the days of Nero. Many people are afraid to admit this fact, as these forms, rites, and doctrines appear to be the foundations of all religion and without them civilization seems in danger of being wrecked. Ecclesiasticism and theology

have done their work. In some form they will continue to exist, but they are not and never have been and can never hope to be the essence of Christianity. They are the body in which the spirit of Christ lives. The body may die but the spirit is eternal. We do not want to "throw the baby out with the bath" but there is danger of thinking that the bath is the baby. There is no reason for preserving the bath water after it has fulfilled its function. Its usefulness is past and we need clean water. The clean water is new and does not smell of soap and, therefore, some people object to it.

Quo Vadis? shows how the disciples of Christ came into conflict with the Roman Empire. The struggle it tells about is a fight to the death between pagan civilization armed with wealth and culture, philosophy and scepticism, gladiators and savage beasts and the disciples of Christ, whose only equipment was faith, purity and loving-kindness. This appears to be an unequal contest, and so it proved to be. The power of paganism was hopelessly incompetent in dealing with its apparently impotent adversary.

The pageantry and buffoonery of Cæsar, the beauty and depravity of Poppæa, his wife, the brilliance of the court, the immorality of courtiers, the discussions of philosophers, the rabble at the arena—all form a background for the story.

Sienkiewicz chose his characters with great skill. Petronius, the author, dilettante and friend of Nero, plays a leading part in the plot. Every student of the Roman period knows something about Petronius. His luxury and artistic temperament, his cynicism and position as social leader represent and illustrate characteristics of the inner circle of society and of court life.

Vinicius, the hero, is a soldier who possesses many of the old Roman virtues tainted with the degeneracy of his times. He is a wealthy patrician and a nephew of Petronius.

The home life of Petronius and Vinicius is shown in detail. The luxurious feasts, where the richest foods were served and music was enjoyed or philosophy discussed, were also filled with wild orgies of drunkenness and the most bestial kind of sensuality. The life of the Roman

patrician was based on the servitude of countless slaves. The authority of the owner who could beat, torture, or kill the oldest and most faithful slave is pictured in all its brutality. The rottenness of society where the women of the noblest birth were frequently immoral and where courtesans held sway is revealed. While the Roman patrician enjoyed the mental stimulus of philosophical discussion, art criticisms, and intellectual exercises, he was still a libertine and a degenerate. Morality was laughed at, and virtue was a joke. The gods were bribed in time of peril and ignored in days of prosperity. The most degenerate of Roman emperors had been raised to the godhead, and the people laughed up their sleeves both at the temple services and at the priests, who were supposed to be the religious leaders.

The population of the city was wild and uncontrollable in its emotions. Intrigue and murder, seduction and theft, extortion and bribery existed everywhere. When the excesses of Cæsar caused popular criticism he turned it away with gladiatorial combats and brutal games in the

arena. With this atmosphere of luxury and license, of culture and depravity, of philosophy and agnosticism, Sienkiewicz shows another type of character. Pomponia, the Roman matron of the old school, was laughed at for her virtue. Her guest, Lygia, the daughter of a deceased hostage and former Lygian king, is of the same character. They were secret Christians, and people could not understand the simplicity and purity of their lives.

When Vinicius fell in love with Lygia, Petronius advised him not to ask her hand in marriage, as it was beneath the dignity of a Roman patrician to marry the daughter of a hostage, but to take her into his establishment as his mistress. The plot of the story develops from this effort. While the slaves of Vinicius were bringing Lygia to his palace a mob of Christians kidnapped her. The conflict was between pagan lust and Christian virtue. As the story unfolds these two ideals of life are brought into contrast. Vinicius, the proud patrician, was humbled by his love for Lygia. In his search for her he was brought into contact with the Christians. He dis-

covered them to be pure in their morals and high in their ideals. He was surprised to find they did not worship the head of an ass and did not kill infants at their secret meetings. The home life of the Christians, in its simplicity and its kindliness, is contrasted with the luxury and selfishness of a Roman palace. Vinicius was so impressed by the character and teachings of the Christians that in time he too became a disciple of Christ.

The story takes us into the horrors of a Roman dungeon, where Lygia was confined with other Christians. There are vivid pictures of the martyrdom of the followers of Christ in the arena. Their faith is contrasted with the brutality of the Roman mob. Every page of the book is filled with vivid descriptions, exciting incidents, and interesting anecdotes. Nero and Poppæa are shown in all their vulgarity while Acte lives in the palace, a discarded favorite but sustained by a new-found faith in Christ.

Sienkiewicz shows the inability of philosophy to create morals, to maintain civilization, or to control sensuality. Religion was dead and

philosophy was merely an intellectual exercise. This is a true picture of Roman civilization under Nero.

Warwick Deeping, in *Sorrell and Son*, presents another picture that is worthy of consideration as a contrast to *Quo Vadis?* and its spiritual background. Deeping shows England in the post-war period. He has written a delightful story, but in its ethics it is a reversion to stoic philosophy. Stephen Sorrell's love of his son and the relations of father and son are ideal. Every father should read *Sorrell and Son*, as it contains many helpful suggestions as to the way a boy should be treated by his father.

Stephen Sorrell is a stoic. He battles against a blind fate, grimly and hopelessly. He exerts all his strength to hold off a relentless enemy. When Deeping deals with moral questions he reverts to the Roman idea that all sex relations are merely a matter of personal preference. He is unjust to both men and women. For two thousand years humanity has been struggling against this false conception. In spite of many blunders and mistakes, morals have become

purified and the ideals of human conduct have been raised. It is a pity that such a strong book as *Sorrell and Son* is not leavened with a little Christian faith. Religion is an essential element of life and, therefore, it adds a quality to a book that improves its character. It does not have to be so sweet as to be sickening, as the glad game was in *Pollyanna*, but it should give an atmosphere like a fall morning in the mountains, when every breath is a joy and every view of the hills and valley is beautified.

With all the comfort and sensuality of a Roman's life, every one of them lived in danger of incurring Cæsar's displeasure, and that meant degradation or death. St. Paul played on this shadow when the apostle answered the assertion of Petronius that Christianity destroyed the joy of life by asking, Would happiness be increased or destroyed if Nero were a Christian? The answer was so obvious that Petronius dodged the question. A pure spiritual religion does not destroy the zest of life. It intensifies and glorifies existence.

Many intelligent people fail to appreciate

the essential quality of Christianity. To them religion is a thing of churches and cathedrals, of rites and rituals, of creeds and dogmas. This is a total misconception of what faith in Christ really means. The churches and cathedrals, the rites and rituals, the creeds and dogmas, are merely the external manifestations of a spiritual aspiration.

Christianity is living according to the teachings and examples of Christ. The personality of Christ has inspired a library of books which cannot be numbered. To mention a few important ones, there is in fiction, *Darkness to Dawn*, by Farrar, and *Ben Hur*, by Lew Wallace; and in biography, *The Life of Christ*, by Papini, and *The Man Nobody Knows*, by Bruce Barton.

Sidney Lanier summed up the impression Christ's character makes on the human mind when he said:

But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of
time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,

But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best
Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or
Priest,—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what
lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or
death's,—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?

Christ lived in a critical and acrimonious atmosphere. The religionists of His day hated Him with a bitter hatred. He taught the people with spies about Him ready to misinterpret every word He uttered. In spite of this antagonism His character remains spotless and unblemished.

For two thousand years hostile critics have placed His life, character, and teachings under

the microscope of investigation. Philosophers and pedants have tried to minimize His originality, to find flaws in His ethics, and to discredit His religious principles. The best efforts of His enemies have ended in failure. He still remains the Crystal Christ.

Christ's personality possessed a curious contagion, which is one of its most noteworthy characteristics. Many harlots and publicans, thieves and sinners, with other moral outcasts, came in touch with Him and developed a new moral and religious character. The Jews crucified Him in an effort to overcome His spiritually contagious individuality, but instead of ending the contagion His death augmented it.

The contagion of Christ, which is the root of Christianity, gave the disciples an entirely new conception of life. It brought them into personal contact with the spiritual meaning of existence. Life was no longer a mere question of existence. Life was from God and, therefore, eternal. A new conception of values developed with this realization. Pleasure and comfort were no longer the sole aim of human effort. Man was

a child of God and heir of spiritual things. Immortality was no longer a vague possibility. Eternal life had begun when a disciple accepted Christ as his Saviour. Death lost all horrors, and persecution ceased to dissuade men from becoming Christians. Morality was an outward manifestation of an inner change. Sensuality and lust, even in the days of a demoralized society, could not be condoned, as man's responsibility was a personal and direct obligation to God. This contagion of Christ was handed on to His disciples. *Quo Vadis?* shows how it worked through the Roman Empire.

Sienkiewicz deals with the contagion of Christ in his description of Chilo. This man was a peripatetic philosopher, a rascal, rogue, charlatan, thief, panderer and betrayer of the innocent. In all literature it will be hard to find a more contemptible character than Chilo. He sold the wife and daughter of his friend, Glaucus, into slavery, and then betrayed Glaucus and tried to kill him. Could any man suffer more at the hands of a treacherous friend than Glaucus did from Chilo?

In the garden of Nero, while Glaucus was being burned at the stake, Chilo came face to face with him. Chilo pleaded for forgiveness and Glaucus granted it. Suddenly through Chilo's depraved mind and wrecked soul a new light shone. Out of the dregs of a human character a new nature was born. Chilo caught the contagion of Christ. Nothing could break his new faith, and he hurled his defiance at Nero, and then, at the hands of the enraged emperor, suffered martyrdom.

Underlying the plot of *Quo Vadis?* like a strong foundation under a well-built house is the belief that the men who came in contact with Christ while He was here on earth caught this spirit from their Master. These men in turn handed on this spirit to those with whom they came in contact.

Christianity is not a creed or a theology. It is a life. It is not a ritual or a dogma. It is a spirit. It is transmitted by personality touching personality in the name of Christ. It begets a new sense of man's obligations to himself, to other men, and to God. It may come, and usually does, by

personal contact. It may also be imparted through the written page. The only necessary thing is to have the human mind filled with a realization of what Christ was and did. When the individual appreciates what Christ was and did—no matter what this person's theology or lack of theology may be—a Christian is born.

With this idea of life which the followers of Christ caught from Him they also developed a power to do things. "Power" may seem to be an indefinite word, but its meaning in this connection is clear. It is an energy that attains moral and spiritual results. We have a unit of so-called horse power to tell us how much work an engine can do. The engine is capable of doing certain things, and we translate its ability into terms of a horse. The disciples had strength to do definite tasks. They were able to overthrow the Roman religion and Greek philosophy. Their conquest was not made with spears and swords. We cannot say they went forth as an army with a certain number of chariots, horsemen, and footmen. They went forth as souls spiritually recreated by God. This seems too vague to mean anything.

The definition appears to be diaphanous and intangible. In spite of its apparent weakness the Roman legions found Christianity irresistible. Some of the men who tried to stamp out Christianity caught this spirit and ceased being persecutors to become martyrs.

Probably the most startling illustration of this was the case of Saul of Tarsus. His conversion is no more surprising than Sienkiewicz's story of Chilo. These things really happened. They have been occurring from time to time for two thousand years. You can find countless illustrations in the archives of the missionary work of the various churches, and every Gospel mission shows the same thing. Jerry McAuley, the wharf rat, thief, and drunkard, became the honored preacher of the Water Street Mission only a generation ago.

Quo Vadis? is a good account of how the spirit of Christ fought with Roman civilization. It is fiction, but like all great fiction it is a true picture of the times it represents. It is a vivid story of the Contagion of Christ and shows how this contagion swept the world.

CONCLUSION

MY OBJECT in writing this book has been to show the important place religion holds in daily life. In spite of the ridicule of irreligious men and the widespread misunderstanding on the part of others of what real religion is, I am convinced that the Gospel of Christ is essential to human happiness and that without its controlling and inspiring influences there is no possibility of conserving civilization. Sin, selfishness, immorality and greed are enemies constantly at work destroying the innocent as well as the guilty. If these unclean things gain control of the public conscience, civilization will be unable to bear the strain. It will crumble and disintegrate.

Religion overcomes a weak man's weakness and gives strong men an ideal that stimulates their activities and tests their strength.

In order to keep the theme definite and clear

I have tried to keep my own theological opinions in the background. The one essential thing is to show men the reasonableness and helpfulness of pure religion. Christ is the finest character and most stimulating religious teacher the world has ever seen. The important question of how a man shall interpret Christ must be left to his own judgment and reasoning power. No one can settle this question for all men. Mankind is too widely divided by the different types of mind, recognized and tabulated by the psychologists, for any one explanation to be universally satisfactory. All these various types of character have to face temptations, sin, suffering, and death. They all need God to give a meaning to existence and an assurance of ultimate victory. There are as many and as distinctive theological answers to the questions about God and salvation as there are psychological types of mind.

If I can help some individuals in these various groups to see the supreme value of religion and help them to appreciate the wisdom and beauty of Christ, I am satisfied. A world without a God and a Saviour, without moral ideals

and self-control, without a program of activities and a goal to seek, is only a pigsty filled with groveling and quarreling swine, where lust, hate, immorality, disappointment, and death reign supreme. Such an existence offers no attractions to anyone. The religion of Christ is a light that overcomes this darkness and makes Eternity an enlarged and nobler spiritual existence. The hope of the world and the bulwark of civilization are found in the religion of Christ.

THE END

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